

TWO
SERMONS

LATELY

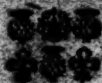
1576
each ed at WESTMINSTER, before
undry of the Honourable House

OF
COMMONS.

The second Edition,

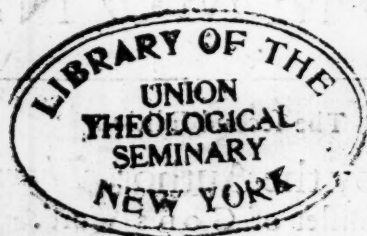
Corrected by the Author, *Thomas Case*,
Minister of Gods Word.

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Honourable Sirs,

THeſe poor conceptions had ſooner ſerved your command in the Preſſe, as formerly in the Pulpit, had not the Egyptian Midwives refuſed to do their office. Your own hand at length was pleaſed to give them deliverance, or elſe they had not ſeen the light at this time, which I humbly deſire they may enjoy under your protection.

They come forth now at length in a good day, to see much of that blessed work happily accomplished, for which they were such earnest and humble suiters to your piety; so that now they humbly present themselves to your view, not so much by way of Remembrance, as of Gratulation. God, in you, hath graciously begun to make good that Evangelical promise, Zech. 12. 8. In defending this in English Jerusalem: He hath made him that was weak among you as David: you have conquered the Lion, and the Bear; and shall not that uncircumcised Philistin (that numerous Beast) who hath not ceased to blaspheme and scatter the Armies of the living God, become like one of these? Behold, he lies grovelling at your feet, there wants nothing but the cutting off his head, which you may do with his own Sword. What fears and discouragements lay upon your Spirits, your own hearts can best report: surely these were not the thoughts and resolutions you brought from home: but this is that which the Lord spake concerning Zerubbabel, Zech. 4. 6. Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit. Truly God hath honoured you with little less than a miraculous effusion of his Spirit, brightning your Spirits, and strengthening your hands to David-like prowess. Our hopes and expectations are now, that the great and faithful God will perfect the promise, in making him that is as David among you, like the Angel of the Lord, who went out into the Camp of the Assyrians, and smote an hundred fourscore and five thousand, 2 Kings 19. 31. The swarms of that Babylonish brood of Jesuits, Priests, and Papists, who lie in their Trenches ready to surprize us upon advantage; besides the multitude of the prophane and scandalous sons of Levi, whose iniquities hath caused men to abhorre the Sacrifice of the Lord, 1 Sam. 2. 17. these, I say it is to be feared, do exceed the number of the Assyrian Army: The God of Angels make you like the Angel of God, to smite them all: at least, (for

am not a man of Blood) though the Papists live, yet Popery may be put to death; if the scandalous be spared as men, they may be cut off as ministers, or rather, the shame and reproach of the Ministry.

Gird therefore your Sword upon your thigh, ye mighty of God; with your glory and honour, and in your honour ride prosperously, and let your right hand teach you terrible things; Let your Arrows (the Arrows of Justice) be sharp in the hearts of the Kings enemies, the enemies of your glorious King in Heaven, the enemies of your gracious King on earth; who conspire nothing else but the unthroning of both.

The work you are now about, is the renewing and establishing the Kingdom upon the Lord Christ, and his Anointed: wherein what you have done already, (though much exceeding, not only our hope, but our wonder,) look upon I beseech you, not as your merit, but Heavens mercy. Consider how much God hath honour'd you, more than you have honour'd God: for surely God hath employed you in one of the choicest and most glorious pieces of service that ever he accomplished by the sons of men, for the enlargement and advancement of his poore Church, since her Creation by Himself, or Redemption by his Son. Ob lay this as an engagement upon your souls, to go thorow-stitch with the work of God; for which do you purifie and purge your selves, I beseech you; that as the work is holy, so you may be holy too, that in future Ages this may be call'd, the happy Parliament, the holy Parliament, the Parliament of God; and you, The Repayers of the breaches, The Restorers of the desolate places to dwell in, The Reformers of the Reformation.

You are now with Zerubbabel, building the Temple of God, a worke that once was Davids desire, but not his happinelle; yet David lost nothing by that desire; David would have built an House for God, God did build an house for David. My prayer for you, our Gospel-Zerubbabels, shall be, that as it is (I know) your holy ambition, so it may be your glory to build a Temple for Jesus Christ; and that as your hands have layd the foundation, so your hands may also finish it; that you may bring forth the head Corner-stone thereof with shouting, and all the Churches of the Saints with us may cry, Grace, grace unto it.

And while you are building Gods House above, the Lord build your Houses at home; be an Husband to your Wives, a Father to your Children, a Master to your Servants, a God to your Families and estates; that when you return in peace, you may finde, There is nothing lost in serving God.

So prayes

Your Honours most humbly devoted in
all Christian service,

Tho. Esst.



Ezek. 20. 25.

Wherefore I gave them also Statutes that were not good, and Judgements whereby they should not live.



Herefore I gave them, &c. And wherefore did he so? The wherefore to this wherefore lyes scattered up and down in the former part of this Chapter, which discourseth at large, what God had done for this people, and what this people had done against God; whereof the verse before my Text is an Epitome, wherein the (therefore) is drawn up to four heads.

First, They executed not my judgements. Secondly, They despised my Statutes. Thirdly, They polluted my Sabbaths. Fourthly, Their eyes went after their fathers Idols. And because they had done this wherefore, or therefore, I gave them Statutes that were not good, and Judgements whereby they should not live.

For the opening of the words, I shall briefly satisfie these three Quarries.

First, What these Statutes and Judgements were, and when made?

Secondly, How God can be said to give them?

And Thirdly, Why he gave them?

For the first, By evill Statutes, and destroying judgements, is not meant the Ceremoniall Law, as some absurdly dream: The Ceremoniall Law being (for the time it was) both good, and profitable, as leading unto Christ, who was the Fountain of goodnesse and life. But by evill Statutes, &c. are meant all those wicked and cursed decrees and Statutes, whereby this people was

Gal. 3. 24

1 King. 12. insinuated to prophaneness and Idolatry; and that not confined to
 26. to the one period and distinction of time, but in the severall and suc-
 end, cessive Reigns of prophane and Idolatrous Kings and Princes;
 As namely, The Idolatrous decrees that Ierobeam made, &c. The
 golden Calves that he set up, and the Constitutions and Canons he
 ordained about their Service and worship (as he conceived) for
 the securing, but in truth, to the undermining of his Throne, and
 the ruine of his Kingdom, As in the Text, Judgements whereby
 they should not live. That Heathenish Idolatry and parricide that
 2 Kings ^a Achaz first (it seems) enacted, and then acted, causing his Son
 16. 3, 4 to passe through fire, &c. And after him his wicked Grandchilde
 2 Kings ^b Manasses, and after him his wicked Son ^c Ammon; by whose
 21. 3 to examples, encouragements, and commands, their Subjects were
 the 7. seduced to the committing of the same impieties; ^d Manassib se-
 c Verſ. 19 duced them to do more evill, then did the Nations whom the Lord de-
 20. stroyed before the children of Israel. ^e They sinned, and made Judah
 d Verſe 9 to sin, so that they also caused their Sons and Daughters to passe
 e 1 Chro. through the fire. And this wicked Statute and destroying judgement
 33. 6, 7. is, by a famous Synecdoche in the Verse after my Text, set for all
 2 King 17. the rest (as well it might for the notoriousness of it,) I polluted
 17. them in their own gifts, in that they caused to passe through the fire,
 all that opened the womb.

Whereby it is evident that this, with the rest of the same
 pedigree, were the evil Statutes, and killing judgements which
 God gave them.

Quest 2. But then secondly, How could that be? For how could the
 good God be said to give them Statutes that were not good? The
 living God that giveth life, be said to give judgements, whereby
 the Creature should not live?

Answer. For answer hereunto, God may be said to give Statutes,
 properly to improperly.

Properly, And in a strict sense, God can be said to give no
 Laws, but those which he himself makes and commands, and so
 Verse 11, God is said to give the Ten Commandments by Moses. So here in
 12. this Chapter, God sayes, I gave them my Statutes, and I gave them
 my Sabbaths, &c. And this was properly of Gods giving. Impro-
 perly, God may be said to give such Statutes as he suffers to be given,
 and this he did.

First,

First, By leaving their Kings, and Councillors, and Statesmen, to make and command these wicked and Idolatrous Laws and Statutes.

Secondly, By leaving the Prophets of those times to Preach and publish them, as in *Jeroboams* and *Ababs* time, &c. There wanted not Prophets enough to cry up in their Pulpits the Idolatrous Acts and Decrees for the Calves, that did labour in their Sermons to make the people beleeve, that their King had none but pious and compassionate intentions; namely, to save the people some cost and pains in a long and chargeable journey, that there was nothing in them that any body need scruple at; and that whosoever did refuse *Conformity* and *obedience*, were none but a company of factious and seditious fellows, enemies to the State and Government. This was that folly God complains of, *Jer. 23. 14.* (as in divers other places) *I have seen an horrible thing in the Prophets of Samaria, &c.* to the end of *Vers. 14.*

Thirdly, By leaving the people to themselves, to be ensnared and seduced by the commands of the one, and the flatterings of the other; leaving them, I say, to the blindness and darkness of their understanding, whereby they could not discern the evil of those abominations, to the vileness of their affections, and the servileness of their wills, whereby, if they saw the evil, they could not expedite and deliver themselves from it. *The Prophets Jer. 5. 31.* *prophecy falsely, and the Priests bear rule by their means, and my people love to have it so, &c.* They thought it was well enough, neither would they have had a change of Government if they might.

In all this, There was two parts, the sinfull part, and the judicall part; The sinfull part was their's, the Rulers, the Prophets, the Peoples. The judicall part was Gods, not by infusing any darkness into their understanding, but not infusing light; not by influencing any malignity upon their wills, but not influencing conquering grace and power, leaving them in a just judgement to themselves. I say, in as much as this judicall or penall part was Gods, God may be said in this respect, to have given them these Statutes, &c.

But why did he deal thus with them, and what was the cause? *Quere 3.*

This (I shewed you in the entrance) lyes in the 24. Verse, *Answer.* which

which give me leave yet now a little more distinctly to discover unto you. First, They did *not execute his judgements*, whether by judgements you understand *Gods Laws, and Statutes, and Commands* themselves, these were not obeyed; the whole Land swarmed with *Atheisme, Prophanesse, and Idolatry*, the spirits of men were every where up in Arms against God and his Law. Or whether by *Judgements* are meant those *penalties and censures* which by Gods appointment, should have been inflicted upon offenders; these were not executed; the sad report whereof, Hab. 1:4. the Prophet *Habbakkuk* makes to God, Therefore the Law is slack, and judgement doth never go forth.

A Metaphor taken from a Bow and Arrows, there was a Bow and a string; that is, there were good Laws, and good Judgements (as good as any people ever were blest withall) but the Bow lay *unbent*, the Law *unstring*, so that the Arrow of Judgement was not shot into the heart of offenders; but on the contrary (as it follows in the Text,) The wicked doth compass about the righteous, therefore wrong judgement proceedeth. The summe is this, *Drunkards* might escape, and *Adulterers* might escape, and *Idolaters*, and *Murderers* might go scot-free: *Wicked enough*, and *safe enough*. But if a *righteous man*, one who made conscience of obeying God, rather then man, whose conscience was not made of cheverill leather, to stretch to the latitude of an universall blinde obedience to humane authority (which the Cathedrall Priests of those times so much cryed up) if he spake but a word, though never so innocent, and just, they would put their malicious Comments upon it, and make him an offender for it. They make a man an offender for a word, it was no matter whether he were an offender or no, they would make him one; and when they had hemmed and compassed him in, he could never get out of their cruell tallons, with his garments whole upon his skin, or his skin upon his flesh, or his flesh upon his bones; yea, it was well if he could bring them away whole, for their illegall censures extended even to the very bones also, as you may see in a neighbouring place, They hate the good, and love the evil; they pluck off their skin from off them, and their flesh from off their bones; they also eat the flesh of my people, and flay their skin from off them, and.

Isa. 29:21.

Micah 3:
2, 3.

and breake their bones, and chop them in pieces as for the pot, and as flesh within the Caldron.

1. They suck and boyle Gods people to the very last drop of their lives, and livelyhood. In a word, the mouth of all the Cannons were turned upon the City of God, to batter down the Walls thereof, that were first planted against the enemy.

This was the first branch of the *wherefore*, or cause.

Secondly, They stayed not here, but from not executing they rose up to hatred, and despising of these Statutes.

They despised my Statutes. Wherein, or How?

Ans. First, by lusting after *Egypt* and her Onions, even then when they were but newly by a high hand and stretched out arm, brought out from thence: *ye have despised the Lord*, Num. 11. 29. which is among you, and have wept before him, saying, why came we forth of *Egypt*? Might they have enjoyed their Onions and Garlick of *Egypt*; they did not care whether they enjoyed God or no; was not this a despising of him? Crying as it were like *Esau*, concerning his birth-right: Behold, I am at the point to dye, and what profit shall this birthright do to me? Thus *Esau* despised his birthright; was not this almost their language, Behold, we are at the point to dye, and what good shall this God do to us? Thus *Israel* despised their God and his Statutes. Gen. 25. 32. 34.

Secondly, By presumptuous sinning. They have despised the Law of the Lord, and have not kept his Commandments; they Amos 2. 4. sinned in the very face of the command, say the Law and the faithfull dispensers of it what they would; the presumptuous sinner is a despiser.

Thirdly, By polluting the ordinances, Thus saith the Lord, Num. 11. 30. 31. Mal. 1. 6. to you oh Priests, that despise my Name; they were stout enough (it seems) to ask wherein; and God (when he might have kicked them into Hell for their insolence) he is patient enough to tell them wherein, you have offered polluted bread upon mine Altar; thus is; they defiled Gods ordinances with ingredients and mixtures of their own inventions, they did with the ordinances of God they cared not what; was not that a despising of them?

Fourthly, By opposing and suppressing the Ordinances, as

Ierc. 5. 12.

God testifies of them, *Isa. 30. This is a rebellious people, lying children, that will not bear the Law of the Lord, here is their opposing; they are rebellious, they will not hear: and when they had no minde to obey, they would put it off with some trick or other, and say the Prophets did lye; God never commanded them to preach such things, They have belied the Lord, and say it is not he; and thus saying, the Prophets did lie, they themselves did lie. This was their opposing of the Ordinances, but this was not all; it followes, They say to the Seers, See not, and to the Prophets, prophecy not; down with preaching, down with these Sermons, away with these Isaiahs, Jeremiahs, Habakkuks, these be the troublers of Church and Common-wealth; men that are alwayes baulking against Idolatry, and through the loyns of Idolatry, strike at any harmlesse and profitable Ceremonies, whereby the people may be edified: men that are alwayes preaching hell and the Law, and strictnesse, and precisenesse, that we do not know how to behave our selves among them: if we must have preaching, let us have it of another strain. Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, oyled Sermons, plausible discourses that may not disquiet and perplex tender consciences, if not, let him begone, out of the way with them, silence, suspend, banish them. Cause the holy one of Israel to cease from before us, that is, tell us not of such strictnesse and holinesse, we cannot be so holy as God is: here was their suppressing of the ordinances, and both these God calls despising. Wherefore saith the holy One of Israel, because ye despise my Word, &c.*

Verse 11.

Ier. 32. 17.
Isai. 5. 23.

24. *Fifthly, By countenancing and justifying of sin. They say still to them that despise me, thus saith the Lord, ye shall have peace. Be not afraid, the Lord will neither do good nor harm, and this was a despising of God and his Statutes; they that justify the wicked, are said in the twenty fourth vers. to despise the holy One of Israel. This was despising indeed, whereby they would make God in the peoples esteem, no better than a despised Idoll, which had eyes, and could not see; and ears, and could not hear; and hands, and could not strike; as if all the threatnings and curses of the Law, were but so many bug-bears to scare children and fools: and so they taught men as it were to play with the beard of God*

God, to mock him to his face.

Sixthly, By persecuting the wayes and people of God. The Nations that persecuted Gods people, are said to despise him. *When I have executed Judgements upon all those that despise them* Ezek. 28
round about : This is despising of God and his Statutes with a 26.
witness, when none are such objects of the malice and cruelty of wicked governors, as those that are most conscientious of observing those Statutes, when it shall be crime enough to be good. This was the second branch of the wherefore, the third follows.

They have polluted my Sabbaths : they ceased not to throw dirt 3.
in the face of Gods Sabbaths ; they cryed down the Sabbath, as a ridiculous, or at least as a superfluous Ceremony ; they cared not what they spake, or did against the holy Sabbath ; they made it their play day, their packing day, their riding day, their selling day, their buying day ; any thing but their Sabbath day ; as you may see in the 13. of Nehem. from the 15. to the 22. Verse ; and they that did not break out into such grosse prophanation, yet grew weary of it, It was a heavy burden to them, and they murmured, saying, *When will the new Moon be gone, and the Sabbath, that we may set forth Wheat.* Amos 8.5.
They thought every hour a day, till the Sabbath was over.

The fourth and last branch. *Their eyes went after their fathers* 4.
Idols. They had a moneths minde to them, they loved them ; ye may know it by their eyes : oh, and why might not they have a Calf, a Chemos, a Baal, a house for Baal, &c. as well as their fathers ? What were all their forefathers damned think ye ? Should they bee wiser then their fathers ? And why should they be confined to one God, when other nations had so many ? Or at least, why might not that one God be set forth to them, under such lively representations, fit to stir up the dull mindes, and quicken the sluggish devotions of common people ? And why might not they bow before such representations, since it was not to the shrines themselves, but to God under those shrines ? And this no essentiall part of Gods worship, but the *modus* only, a mere accident, a circumstance of worship that was in the power of Authority, the Prince and the Arch-Priest, to alter and determine as they please ? These I conceive, were some of those wicked,

B 2

ked, and lying inventions, wherewith the Court Chaplins of those times did flatter and indurate the King and his Courtiers, *Hosea 7. 3. They make the King glad with their wickednesse, and the Princes with their lyes.* He that could bring King *Jeroboam* an argument to justify his Idolatrous courses, though never so wicked, and the Princes a reason to palliate and patronize, their joyning with *Jeroboam* in that Idolatrous service, though it were never so false, and palpable a lie, he was a welcome man at Court, they were extremely glad of him and his service? These are the (*wherefores*) of this severe censure executed in the Text, and was not this cause and reason enough to move God to do so? For did not they in all this, refuse God to be their Governour, and deny his righteous Statutes and Judgements to be their Laws, in that language, *The wayes of the Lord are not equal.* Yea, they did not only deny, but reject God and his Government, as God told *Samuel* upon their importunate desire of a King, *They have rejected me, that I should not reign over them; now rejecting is more then refusing; refusing may proceed from ignorance, when a people, or a person to whom a thing is offered, know not the use, worth, and excellency of it; so Pagans, and Heathens, may refuse the tender of Christ and his Gospel, and be more excusable; Rejecting, implies comparison and triall; as when a servant hath made experiment of two Masters, and when he hath tryed both, returns to his first service again, this is rejecting of the later, as Tertullian instanceth. As a gracious and repentant heart upon the comparing of two conditions and states, prefers the service of God before the satisfying of swinish lusts, as the prodigall, so on the contrary an apostate revolting heart, that hath Tasted the good Word of God, and the powers of the world to come, comparing them with the sweetnesse, it findes in its lusts, prefers the service of sin and Satan, and casts off the yoke of obedience unto Christ. This was the case of this people, whom we finde thus heavily doomed in the Text. And now was it not just with God, when they grew weary of his righteous, and gracious Government, to turn them over to the tyranny of sin, Satan and Idolatry? This God commanded *Samuel* to hint to the Israelites, when they were so mad upon a King.*

Ezek. 18
29.

* Luke 15.
17.
* Hosea 2.
7.

Iere 44. 18

* 1 Sam. 8.
9.

King. *Howbeit thou shalt protest, and shew them the manner of the King, Verſ. 10. to the 19.* The sum, is his government should be such over them, as that they should dearly repent of their change, which was not spoken, nor is to be understood in respect of that state and government it self, Monarchy questionlesse being the best and purest, and safest form of all, and most like the originall, from whence it claims its pedigree. This only I cannot but wonder at by the way, whence this Maxime came into the world, this *English* world, I mean, *No Bishops, no King*: Which with what necessity of support, or dependance it is accompanied, I humbly leave it to your grave wisdomes to enquire and determine: I say, God did not put this answer into *Samuels* mouth, (nor I into your ears) to intimate any dislike of Monarchicall Government, but to shew the difference of the persons, between whom the change was made *sc. a Jehovah for a Saul*; a living God for a dying man; the best of whole government is but a tyranny in comparison of Gods immediate Sovereignty, had *Saul* ended his reign, as well as he began it; and began it sometimes better then he did. This now was done in the height of disloyalty and rebellion, when they changed a glorious God, for a dirty Idol, his pure Laws, for their own impure lusts; and therefore it was just with God to give them over to their own choice. *The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways, Prov. 14. i. e. He loves backsliding, and he shall have his belly full of it: 14.* God will pay him in his own coyn, he hath no delight in God, and God will have no delight in him, *If any man draw back, my Heb. 10. soul shall have no pleasure in him. 38.* In such a case all that see, and hear, will justifie his proceedings: And that might be the second Reason, had we time to prosecute it, why God would give them up, first to prophaneſſe and idolatry to sin even by Statute, before he would utterly destroy them, namely that he might vindicate the justice of his proceeding to all that should see or hear of them. *1 Kings 9. 7, 8, 9.*

And this may be the ground of that wish of Christ, *I would Rev. 3. 15. thou wert hot, that is, forward and zealous, active, and lively; there is no difficulty in this, there is no difficulty in conceiving, why Christ should wish with her so. But why doth he wish her cold, that*

Answ.

is grossely *prophane*, and *idolatrous*, rather then *lukewarm*; Probably in regard of standers by, who would in such a case have justified Christ in his censure and judgements on *Laodicea*: whereas now her lukewarm formality, civility, and moderation in Religion (as we call it) might happily bewitch the eyes of the standers-by, and beget some hard thoughts of Christ in their bosomes, when he should proceed to execute the threatened judgement against her. And thus I have done now with the doctrinall part, I come now to the use.

Use I.

It may serve for an use of *admiration*. A strange use you will say; and to me indeed it is strange and wonderfull, and I would have it so in all your eyes: how we have escaped this doom, and censure all this while, that *England* that hath had so much of the 24. Verse, hath had no more of 25. that *England*, that hath so egregiously sinned with *Israel*, hath not as notoriously been *curst* with *Israel*! That we, that for so many yeers together, have not executed Gods judgements, but *despised Gods Statutes*, in all the severalls before mentioned, (which I cannot stand to repeat) we that have so reproachfully *polluted Gods Sabbaths*, that have done and spoken, and written as vilely against Gods Sabbaths, as *Israel* ever did; *Saturday no Sabbath with them*, and *Sunday no Sabbath with us*, &c. Finally, That we whose eyes have so amorously run after our fathers *Idols*, whose fingers have itched to set up Altars, and Crucifixes, and all our fathers Romish trumpery, are not yet delivered up to these great and fearfull judgements; in the very perfections thereof, *To be given up to Statutes that are not good, and Judgements by which we should not live*: That God hath not left our King and Nobles to make them, our Prophets universally to teach them, and the whole Land to be instructed, and seduced by them; that we and our Children might have sinned by Statute, and gone to Masse by Law, as well as by permission: That this judgement hath not made way for wrath, and laid us open to plague, pestilence, and famine, to battell, murther, and sudden death, a whole *Letany of Judgements*; yea, to that judgement worse then death, the darkening of our Sun, the pulling down of our Stars, the taking away of his Kingdom from us, and ours; and the leaving of us to perish in

Luke 10.

33, 14, 15.

in utter darknesse, as Christ threatens *Capernaum*.

That God hath spared us the life of our good King upon the Throne, hath had his *Obadiabs* among our Nobles; and now hath so over-ruled the hearts and voices of the poor ignorant multitude, that they have sent from all parts of this Kingdom, men of skill and zeal to make *Statutes*, that we hope shall be good, and *Judgements* whereby we and our Children may live.

How comes this to passe, I say, my Brethren? Surely we may all cry out, *free grace, free grace!* That *free grace* which some have spoken against, and others writ against, and lived against, and sinned against with an high hand, and bitter spirits, hath been a good friend to *England* at this time also, and is not yet weary of doing us good. And besides, let me tell you (though I be no pursuivant) there hath some body been a praying (conventicling as they call it) some *Noahs*, *Jobs*, and *Daniels* making intercession; some *Habbakkuk* standing in the Watch-Tower, some *Jeremy's* praying, some *Moses* crying, some *Jacob* wrestling; that have resolved not to let God go till he bless us; some of Gods Remembrancers that have given him no rest; some *Pauls*, that have not loved their lives and liberties to the death, so they might finish a faithfull Testimony. Surely, *Had not the Lord of Hosts left us a very small remnant* of prayerfull wrestling *Jacobs*, we had been like *Sodom*, and had been made like unto *Gomorah*. Oh that you would consider of this, and change your thoughts of God, and his wayes, and his people. But not unto us, O Lord, not unto us; let us bowe our heads, and worship, for it is the Lords doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.

Secondly, It may serve for counsell and direction for the preventing of such a grievous and killing censure as this is, which I must direct to two sorts of persons.

First, To you the *Worthies* of *Israel*, whom God hath by his own *Vote* and suffrage, singled out of all the *Tribes*, for this great and glorious undertaking. Remember I beseech you, wherefore ye came hither; as for us, me thinks we stood like poor prisoners at the Barre, to be tryed for our lives, and it pleasing the Supream Majesty upon the Throne, to ask us by whom we would be tryed; we have taken the legall course, and have

have all cryed out with one voice, *By God and the Countrey, which Countrey are you* ; Now therefore, as one of Gods, and the Kingdoms poor Remembrancers, I humbly desire you this day, that you will remember (as you do) what he have committed to your trust ; *sc.* our estates, the Wives of our bosomes, the Children of our loynes, our lives, our bodias, and (which is above all) our right and title to the unvaluable Gospel of Jesus Christ, and therein our very souls right and title to Heaven, and eternall glory. A high, and most invaluable *Depositum* ! Take heed, I beseech you that you do not leave us in the hands of this dreadful Judgement, *evil Statutes, and killing Laws.*

And to this end, Give me leave to branch it out into this threefold caution.

First, Enquire and search, I beseech you, into those Laws and Statutes that are made, to see whether there be no *evil Statute*, no *killing Judgement* (*soul-killing judgement*) that doth yet lye dormant, which may be awakened hereafter when occasion doth serve, to slay us, and our Children. The Gospel in generall is called *the Paschever*, and we hope this Parliament, in particular, may be christned the *Lords Paschever*, wherein the Lord we hope will passe over his people, to save them with a mighty Salvation, and to destroy their enemies. Now in the *Paschever*, you know they were to put away all *leaven* out of their houses, *there must no leaven be seen in all their borders.* And that they might accurately, and punctually observe this command ; my Author tels me, they did these three things.

Exod. 15.
12,

First, They took all the *leaven* which lay in open view, above board (as it were) and threw it into the fire.

Secondly, They made a most curious and criticall search, searching with candles every corner, every little Mousse-hole, where any crum might happily lye hid, that if it were possible they must leave none behinde them.

Thirdly, That they might make sure work, when they had made an end of searching, in a solemn manner they *curst* the rest that they could not finde, saying, *Cursed be the leaven that doth remain.* Men, and Brethren, do you so, I beseech you, in this Paschever of the Lords ; what *leaven* of *prophanesse* or *Papish Idolatry*,

Idolstry lies in ordinary view, take it, and throw it into the fire ; do with it, as they have done with the precious bodies of Gods Saints, away with it to Smithfield, burn it, burn it.

Secondly, search narrowly for that which may remain, search every corner of the Law, *Common-law*, *Civill-law*, *Canon-law*, search (as God searched *Hierusalem*) with candles, make a curious search, least any crum of that cursed *leaven* may remain.

Thirdly, In case any piece or crum of this *leaven* should scape your discovery, curse what you cannot finde, leave a curse upon the very crums and (shadow of Superstition ; *Ioshua's Anathema* *Iosh. 6. 27.* upon him that shall ever attempt to build the *Walls of Jericho* againe.

Should you make good Statutes, and not take away the evill, you do but create a *Nebuchadnezzars* Image, which may have happily a golden head, but feet of dirt, which will suddenly be resolved into a heap of confusion.

God cannot endure mixtures, and therefore you shall finde the charge laid in by God against Idolatrous *Israel*, is not the pulling up of Gods thresholds, nor the pulling down of his posts, nor the demolishing of his walls ; but their setting of their thresholds, by *Exck. 43. 8* his thresholds, and their posts, by his posts, and a wall between him, and them ; or (as the Hebrew reads it) there was but a wall between me, and them ; on one side of the Wall they might have gone to the service of God, and on the other side, to the sacrifice of Idols ; on the one side of the curtain you might have heard a Sermon, on the other side you might have gone to Masse. These Idolatrous mixtures Gods soul hates ; this was their ruine, and verse 7. 8. the ruines of their Kings, and Kingdome.

O you *Worthies of our Israel* ! let it not be said of you, as it is reported of some of the good Kings of *Judah*, they did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord, nevertheless *High-places* were not taken away. Leave us not I beseech you an *High-place* in the Land, leave us not one bouse for *Baal*, not an usinfull of Idolatrous worship, leave us not a rag of the *Wore* of *Babylon*, the plague may lye in it, and break out into a destroying pestilence many years hence, when you are asleep in the dust.

Be ye like *David*, when after Gods own heart, perform like *Hozekiah*, bring out all uncleanness out of the house of the Lord. Remember upon what Commandement it is that God is called a jealous God. And be you jealous also for your God, and for his worship.

Secondly, Revive and corroborate those that are good; we have many good Statutes, as good (blessed be God) as any Nation under Heaven, many righteous and wholesome judgments among us; but they have lien like the two *Witnesses* in the Revelation, with their bodies dead in the Streets, &c. Oh that this Parliament would put life and soul into them again! execution is the very life of the Law.

Thirdly, Make such Statutes and Judgments as shall be wanting for the safety and beauty of this Church and Commonwealth; wherein let your care and commendation be that of *Moses*, to do all things according to the patterne. To which end, consult with the Oracles of God, and with the faithfull and skilfull dispensers thereof; that in the building of this second Temple, there may not be the noise of a hammer heard among you; think it not enough that you leave us in a safe condition, unless you leave us in a glorious condition; we shall never look for more to be done in this glorious work of Reformation, then shall be done now, nor you for a like opportunity.

The second branch of this exhortation, I must direct to all you that stand before God this day; would you have this fearfull judgement diverted? do you desire that this Parliament may give you good Statutes, and judgements, whereby you, and your children may live? First then, *mourn for the generall neglect and despising of Gods Statutes*, both in Citie and Countrie, both in high-places and low-places; let the violation of Gods Lawes, and the violating of his Ordinances and people, pierce your souls with godly sorrow. *Personall sins are made Nationall, when they are not punished by Authority; and Nationall sins are made personall, when they are not laid to heart by the Subject.*

The whole Land is made desolate, because no man layes it to heart. Brethren, the day of mourning is at hand, and blessed be God, that

that hath put it into the heart of the King and Parliament, to pra- Ioel 2. 15.
claime a Fast, to call a solemn Assembly. Oh, labour before hand
 to get your hearts into a mourning frame; desire God, to lay
 them a soaking in the blood of Christ, let *Jeremiab*s wish be Iere. 9. 1.
 yours, *Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountaine of*
tears; that God would open the windows in your heads, and
 break up the fountains of the deep in your hearts; that with *Da-*
wid, Rivers of waters might run down your eies, because men keepe
 not Gods Law, that a Deluge of sorrow, may swallow up a Deluge
 of sin; and you may wash off the pollution of Gods Sabbaths
 with your tears.

Secondly, Be carefull to execute Gods Statutes and judge-
 ments in your own jurisdiction; the hearts of many travaile
 with that foolish pride of *Gael;* *would to God this people were un-* Iudg. 9. 29.
der my hand, then would I remove Abimelech; and with *Abisalom,* *Oh* 2 Sam. 15.
that I were made Judge of the Land, *that every man that had any* 14.
suit, or Cause, might come to me, and I would do him justice! Oh if
 they were *Parliament men,* or *Judges,* and *Governours,* they would
 remove such and such evill instruments that trouble the Church
 and Common-wealth; they would do thus, and thus, I, that
 they would. Wouldst thou be a Governour? wouldst thou be a
 Judge? a Parliament man? Man, thou hast thy wish, Art thou a
 master of a family; see, God hath made thee a King, a Priest, and a
 Prophet there; a King, to govern thy family, a Prophet, to teach them,
 and a Priest, to offer sacrifice for them. Art thou a single man? be-
 hold, every man hath a little Common-wealth within him, a Cor-
 poration that may hang and draw within it selfe. Oh therefore,
 let us now see what you will do for God, and we will beleve
 you; call a *Parliament* in your own houses, in thine own heart,
 thither call every offender before thee; sit as a Ruler, a Judge,
 and arraigne and execute every rebellious traiterous lust, cast
 out whatsoever it is, that will not consist with the government
 of Jesus Christ; make *Laws and Statutes* to set up the domi-
 nion of Christ in thy house, and in thy heart. Then may Christ
 honour thee with a *Well done good and faithfull servant,* thou hast
 been faithfull over little, be thou ruler over much. Else, if thou
 pre-

- pretend't what great matters thou wouldst do for Christ, if thou wert a publike Governour, and neglectest and despisest his Statutes, and his judgements, in thy Family, and in thine own conversation, thou art a *Mountebanke*, an *Impostor*, thou deceivest thy self and others, and the truth is not in thee. Brethren, think not that Parliaments can help you, or the best of Kings do you good, if you neglect and despise Gods Statutes and judgements, within your own limits and bounds. What
- Sam. 12. 25. *Parliaments build sin destroyers*; Remember what Samuel told the people, *if you will still do wickedly, ye shall be destroyed*; ye can have no security from destruction, if you allow your selves security in sinning, *if ye do wickedly, ye shall be destroyed*; and, oh that that were all! oh that wicked men might perish alone, if they will perish! oh that they might be destroyed alone, if they must be destroyed! but that is small which followes; Ye shall be destroyed, *both you, and your King*. The wicked man, is not only a traitor against God, but against the King too: wicked men destroy not only themselves, but King, and Kingdome. If therefore, ye would not be guilty of high-treason (the highest treason) *set up Gods Statutes, execute his Judgements, sanctifie his Sabbath*; crie up a Sabbath, as fast as others crie it down: take heed of Idolatry; yea, take heed of Idolatrous looks, their hands are not charged here; 'tis not said their hands set up their Fathers idols; their feet are not charged, 'tis not said they went
- 2 Joh. 5. 2. *after their Fathers idols*, but their eyes only, their eyes were after their Fathers idols. God cannot endure Idolatrous looks; take heed therefore of Idolatry, and of the appearances of Idolatry. *Little Children, keep your selves from Idols*.
- 2 Thes. 2. 10. *Thirdly, Labour to get you hearts fill'd with the love of the truth*; 'tis the love of the truth, that is the best fence against such a judgement as this is. For want of this, read what the Apostle threatens; *Because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved, God shall send them strong delusions, that they may be damned &c.* The want of love to the truth, laies a people, or a person open to *Heresie and damnation*. And 'tis a wonder of Mercy, that our plentiful want of love to the truth, hath not long

long before this time robbed us of the truth: that for our want of love to the truth, God hath not said concerning us; Take them bereft, take them Papists, take them Jesuites, blinde them, binde them, binde them hand and foot, and cast them into utter darknesse. Oh! love the truth of God, yea, love it even then when it seems to make against thee; when it comes to take away all thy rotten evidences, and to cast thee as it were out of house and home. Love the truth even when it calls for thy right eye, the right eye of sinfull pleasure, for thy right hand of sensuall profit; Love the truths of God, every dram, whereto is the purchase of Christ his blood, and more worth than many Kingdoms, many Worlds. 'Tis not the knowledge of the Truth, but the love of the Truth that will keep from Apostasie: Great Schooles may turn Hereticks, when poor Christians that love the Truth, will prove Martyrs. I cannot dispute for Christ, but I can burn for him: said the poore Martyr.

Fourthly, Pray for the King, and Parliament; it may be there be many stand gazing what a Parliament will do, that enquire every day what news, what news? that yet never, it may be, put up a solemne petition to God for them in secret, since the Parliament began. Oh that you would now berake your selves to your prayers; pray often, pray earnestly, pray as Christ did, pray till you sweat again. Alas, consider it God Isa. lii. 1, 2, should leave King, and Parliament to themselves but one day, they may do that which may undo us and our Posteritie for ever. Pray, but what shall we pray? Pray that God would pour out upon them that Spirit, that rested on Jesus Christ. The Spirit of wisdome and of understanding, the spirit of counsell and might, the spirit of knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord, that may make them of quick understanding, in the fear of the Lord; that they may not judge after the sight of their eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of their ears (i. e. as things seen) but with righteousness, they may judge the poore, and reprove with equitie, for the meekness of the earth; that they may smite the earth with a rod of their mouth, and with the breath of their lips may slay the wicked: that righteousness may be the girdle of their loins, and faithfulness, the girdle

of their reins. Pray for a spirit of love, and unitie, that they may all speak the same thing, and be of the same minde; that they may be cemented together, in the unity of the spirit, and bond of peace; Pray that they may not go forth in their owne wisdom, strength, and righteousness; not in the strength of nature, or parts; but may say, surely in the Lord have I righteousness, and strength; strength and ability to the work, righteousness and acceptance in the work. Pray that God would accomplish that promise upon them; *that he that is feeble among them, may be as David, and he that is as David, may be as God, as the Angel of the Lord before them; that they may go on in the work, with a kinde of omnipotencie, that nothing may be able to stand before them that opposes the Kingdom of Jesus Christ, whether it be thing, or person. Pray, that God would set a guard of Angels round about them, that the Sons of violence may not approach to hurt them: Pray, that this Parliament may be called the happy Parliament, the reforming Parliament, the repaire of the breaches, the restorer of the desolate places to dwell in.* Brethren wherefore hath Parliaments brake up so of late? Surely, one reason (among many) is, the fearfull neglect of prayer; you have wished for Parliaments, called for Parliaments, and perhaps have prayed for Parliaments, and when your prayers have brought them together, you have left them there; and so for a just recompence they have left you as they found you: Oh pray therefore, double your prayers, multiply your praier; let not that man expect a blessing by a Parliament, that doth not engage himself to God in praier for them.

But forget not withall to joyn thanksgiving with praier; for truly that which God hath done already for us, doth highly merit our best acknowledgements, as being not only above our merits, but beyond our faith and expectation; while we may say with the Church, when thou didst terrible things that we looked not for, thou camest down, the mountains flowed down at thy presence; surely God hath done things for us, that we did not looke for.

Quest.

But you will say, if we observe these directions, are we

we sure to speed for the prevention of these judgements threatened?

To this, I answer, There is a *maybe* for that; and that *Ans.* is no small mercie, that we are under a *possibility* of preventing it. 'Twas all the motive that the Prophet *Joel*, and the Prophet *Zephany* had to invite their people to humiliation, and reformation. *Who knowes whether the Lord* *Joel. 1. 14.* *will returne and repent, and leave a blessing bebinde him, &c.* And it may be, you shall be hid in the day of the Lords wrath. Truly, it is a mercie, that we are not on the other side out of all hopes and possibilities of cure and recoverie; and let me adde this to you for your encouragement. Our *maybe* is no despised possibility; but a *maybe* of as faire and glorious hopes, as ever our eyes, and the eyes of our fore-fathers beheld.

But I will tell you what you may be sure of, all you that conscientiously observe the means which God himselfe hath sanctified, which will be richly worth your labour, and that is this. If God should leave our Governours to make such Statutes, and our Prophets to preach them (which God forbid) yet he will not leave you to be seduced and ensnared by them, for so the promise runs, *The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty, he will save, he will rejoyce over thee with joy, he will rest in his love, he will rejoyce over thee singing.* I but where be they God will do thus unto? it followes, *I will gather them that are sorry for the* *Zeph. 17.* *solemn Assembly, who are of thee, to whom the reproach of it was a* *18.* *burthen, (i. e.) whose souls and spirits do groan under the reproach and profanation that was cast upon the holy things of God.*

And what an honor would that be, beloved Christians, when God shall be more jealous for one poore soule that draws neare to him, to weep before him, over the reproach of his Ordinances and Judgements, who is burthened more with Gods dishonours, than its own pressures; I say, what an honour, God shall be more jealous over one such poore soule, then over a whole Kingdome full of those, be they never so great and potent, that neglect

neglect his Statutes, and despise his judgements.

In a word, observe these directions, in an humble and believing conscientiousness; and be sure of this; *If God bring not down his will to thine, he will bring up thy will to his:*

Wherefore worke, my Brethren, worke for the

Land, work for your Posterity; at least work

for your own security. Be steadfast, and

unmoveable, alwayes abounding in the

work of the Lord, for as much as you

know your labour shall not be in

vaine in the Lord.



FINIS.



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THE SECOND SERMON

Preached before divers of the Honorable
House of Commons at
Westminster.

EZRA IO. 2.3.

*—Yet now there is hope in Israel concerning this thing.
Now therefore let us make a covenant with our God, &c*



It is not in the power of Judgements, or mercies, to bind a people or person to a settled course of due obedience without a further concurrence of conquering Grace.

See here a people after a grievous captivity, and gracious enlargement, scarce warm in their houses, but their lusts begin to revive with their fortunes; and they who are lately returned to their old houses, begin now to return to their old times, in matching themselves promiscuously with the Heathens, concerning whom God hath expressly commanded by his Prophet, saying, *Give not your daughters unto their sons, nor take their daughters unto your sons, nor seek their peace, nor their wealth for ever.* Chap. 9. 1. 2.

Some gracious Spirits among the Nobility came and informe Ezra of the matter, Chap. 9. 1. *Now when these things were done, the Princes came to me, saying, The people of Israel,* and

and the Priests and the Levites have not separated themselves from the people of the Land: for they have taken of their daughters for themselves, and for their sonnes, &c. The good man when he heard this bad newes, was much affected with it, and much afflicted for it, ver. 3. *He rents his clothes, and teares his haire, &c.* A type that his heart was first rent, and his soul torn in pieces (as it were) within him, with holy indignation. And after long astonishment, his sorrow (stopt with her owne fullnesse) finds a vent into Confession and Prayer, from verse the 6. to the end of the Chapter.

When he had done, *Shechaniah* one of those Godly Princes which brought him these sad tidings (as it seemes, for his Grandfather *Elam* I finde reckoned among the heads of the Tribes of Israel, Chap. 2. 7.) stands up and applies himselfe to *Ezra* and the people, with a seasonable Comfort and Counsell, his Comfort invites them to hope of Reconciliation with God, *There is hope in Israel concerning this thing.*

His Counsell calls upon that hope to humiliation and reformation, *We have sinned, &c.*

Let us make a Covenant, &c. q. d. *It cannot bee denied *but we are in a great trespassse before God this day, our sinnes *testifie to our face, that we deserve to be cut off from being *a people; but since what is done cannot be undone, our way *is not to sit downe and despaire, but to rise and reforme: We *know what a God Israels God hath been to our fathers; *whenthey have repented of the evill of sinne, he hath repented *of the evill of punishment, and sure he hath not spent all his *stock of mercies upon them, he is a Fountain of mercies that *never can be drawn drie; there is hope therefore that our *repentance may find mercie with our God, as our fathers did. *Come on then, and let us strengthen our hands to the work, *which God and our necessity calls for, let us humble our selves *for what is past, and resolve on reformation for the future,

We have trespassed against our God, &c.

For now there is hope in Israel, &c.

Now therefore let us make a covenant.

In this short, but pathetickall speech, you have

1. An ingenuous confession, *We have sinned.*
2. A comfortable exception, *Yet there is hope.*
3. A gracious conclusion, *Now therefore let us make a Covenant, &c.*

1.
2.
3.

The particular sin here confessed, is *heathenish matches*; the rule of reformation, *a bill of divorce* for wife and children, *let us make a Covenant with our God, to put away the wives, and such as are born of them.* Which, since it was (as it seems) but a judicall law of God to that people, I finde it now repealed in the Gospel, and a quite contrary Canon established by the Apostle. *If the unbelieving wife be pleased to dwell with a believing husband, let him not put her away: and if the unbelieving husband please to dwell with the believing wife, let her not leave him.* 1 Cor. 7. 12.

The reason follows, *Verf. 14.*

For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife: that is, Preparative, in the order of second causes; while such means are used which God hath sanctified for conversion; he is *candidatus timoris*, a Probationer of the true fear of God, as *Tertullian* calls him; and *candidatus fidei*, as *Ierom* in imitation of *Tertullian*, a Probationer of the true faith.

And *Interim* by virtue of the one believing parent, the children are also *holy*, that is, capable of all the badges and privileges of Christianity, as Baptisme, and other means of grace; *So neither let them be put away; for they are a holy seed; else were your children unclean, but now are they holy.*

And this fence I desire may be remembered in my ensuing Discourse, as oft as I shall have occasion to touch upon these words of my Text, which did therefore invite, and command my eyes and my heart to this portion of Scripture, in as much as they do present unto us, as distinct, compleat, and beautifull a modell and plat-form of Reformation, as any that I can remember in holy Writ, which will more fully appear to you, if you will give me leave to take in some of the preceding and succeeding words in the 2, 3, and 4. verses; and from thence to raise such severall Observations as naturally will offer themselves to your view. As,

We have trespassed against our God.

From whence Observe;

1. Observ. Great Reformation must be ushered in, with deep Humiliation and Confession.

Tet now there is hope in Israel.

2. Observ. Gods Israel may be sinful Israel, but not hopelesse Israel.

Now therefore let us put away, &c.

3. Observ. Hopes of Pacification, are engagements to Reformation.

All the wives, and such as are born of them.

4. Observ. Reformation must be *Univerſall*.

Let us make a Covenant.

5. Observ. Reformation after great Apostacies, must be done by *solemn renewing our Covenant with God.*

According to the counsell of my Lord.

6. Observ. *Commands of Supreme Governors*, falling in with the law of God, *doubles* upon Reformers, the care and necessity of Reformation.

And of them that tremble, &c.

7. Observ. The *suits and cries of trembling hearts*, that tremble at sin and wrath, is a strong Motive to Governors to put on to Reformation.

And let it be done according to the Law.

8. Observ. The *rule of Reformation*, must be the *Word of God.*

For this matter belongs unto thee.

We also will be with thee.

9. Observ. The *duty of Governors*, with the assistance of *Nobles and People*, is a great encouragement to zeal and resolution in Reformation.

Now then arise.

10. Observ. Reformation must be *speedy*.

It is not in my purpose or possibility to follow all these in their proper method and latitude; I will only single out the third of these Observations, as the main subject of my discourse, and make all the rest to attend upon it in their several ranks and places; which is this:

- Doctrine. *Hopes of Pacification are strong engagements or therefore to Reformation.*

The

The man after Gods own heart, understood this mystery. Therefore upon these premisses infers this conclusion, *There is forgiveness with thee (or forgivenesses) many forgivenesses, multitudes of pardons, as Isa. 55. 7.* Ps. 130. 4.

And what therefore? *Therefore thou shalt be feared*; thy *mercy shall engage men to thy fear*. Hopes of pardon shall therefore men to fear of sinning.

The grounds of this are these:

First, Hopes of Reconciliation are *Gods invitations to Reformation*. God doth therefore give some hints and discoveries of his inclinableness to Peace and Reconciliation with a sinfull people or person, to the end that he may invite them to Repentance and Reformation.

Consult for this purpose, those two great Proclamations, the one in the Old, the other in the New Testament; that in the 36. of *Isaiab*, *Thus saith the Lord, Keep ye Judgement, and do Justice: for my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed*. By *Judgement* you may understand the duties of the first Table; by *Justice* the duties of the second Table, to the Observation whereof, God invites, and as it were flatters them, by the approach of his *salvation*; not eternall salvation (here) but temporall; namely, their deliverance from those pressures and oppressions that lay upon them both abroad and at home, both in Church and Common-wealth. And the same thing is meant by *Righteousnesse*, though under another notion; it is called *Salvation*, in regard of the matter; it is called *Righteousnesse*, in regard of Gods promise: so that by *Salvation* and *Righteousnesse*, is meant nothing else but Gods *righteous salvation*, which he promised to their fathers: and now saies the Prophet, God will be as good as his word, in saving you from your bondage and captivity under which you have groaned so long; and it shall not be long first, *his sabbation is neere at hand*, and what then? *Therefore keeps Judgement, and does Justice*. See how he infers the necessity of Reformation upon the premisses of the approach of Gods righteous salvation.

So also in that generall Evangelicall Proclamation of the Advent of our Saviour, *Luke 3. 4. 5. All flesh shall see the salvation*

tion of our God, the world shall be full of the glorious manifestations of a Saviour. And what then? *Prepare ye the way of the Lord, fill me up these vallies of despair and covetousnesse; down with these mountains of pride and oppression; straighten me these crooked wayes of prophanenesse and superstition; make smooth these rough bewen passages of stubbornnesse and rebellion: that is (in a word) study a perfect and a punctuall Reformation, salvation is at hand, he that is the Saviour and salvation will be here shortly; Repent, for the kingdome of God is at hand.* Now are not Gods invitations our engagements to Reformation? If God invite a people or person to him, when he might drive them from him, and spurn them into hell, should it not be a prevailing motive to Repentance? Gods invitations, saith a Father, are *Vincula obedientia*, Obligations to obedience: which if neglected, we make them *Laqueos diaboli*, the snares of Satan. They that sin in the face of invitations, sinne against God and their own mercies, they crosse Gods expectation and their own hopes.

2. Reason.

Secondly, Pacification and Reconciliation are Gods repentings, *Hof. 11. 8. How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee, Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zeboim?* How shall I? God was (as it were) about to doe it, but could not find in his heart; he had thought to have made Ephraim to burn like Admah, and Israel to flame like Zeboim, the Cities about Sodom; but as the fire of vengeance was in his hand, the fire of love took hold of his heart, and melted him into compassion, *My heart is turned within mee, my repentings are kindled together.* He repented him that ever such a thought came into his heart, and now he cries out (as it were) I will not doe it, I cannot doe it. *It shall not be saith the Lord, as Amos 7. 3. 6.*

And now Brethren are not Gods repentings of the evill of punishment, strong engagements to his people to repent of the evill of sinne, whether nationall or personall? Shall God weep tears of compassion over his peoples neck, and shall not his people weep tears of Contrition at his feet? Shall God say, *I will heal, I will lead, I will restore comfort to him and to his mourners,* as Isaiah

57. 18. and shall not they take unto them words, and turn to the Lord, and say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously, so shall we render thee the calves of our lips. A sinner shall not save us, we will not ride upon horses, neither will we say any more to the works of our hands, Ye are our Gods; we will do no more so, Lord, wee'l never doe so wickedly againe.

Tertullian in his Book *de Pœnitentiâ*, who styles himself *Homo natus ad Pœnitentiâ*, a man born to do nothing else but repent, sayes, that God by his own example *dedicavit Pœnitentiâ*, hath consecrated Repentance for our imitation, that when we see God repenting, we might also learn to repent: surely if Gods example cannot prevail with us for this holy imitation, God at length may and will give over repenting, as *Ier. 15. 5. 6. I am weary with repenting*, I will repent no more, unlesse it be of my repenting.

Thirdly, the law of equiry and thankfulness will lay this engagement upon us; for shall God do all for a people, and a people do nothing for God? when their turn is served, shall they then despise, or forget divine indulgence? O height of unthankfulness! Nay, *What shall I render to the Lord for all his benefitts* *Ps. 116. 12.* towards me, is the language of men and women after Gods own heart, the children of God are of a rendering disposition.

This may serve in the first place as a Touch-stone, to try your hopes, of what metall they are made, whether of pure gold, silver, or of brasse and adulterate copper. 1 Use.

What are your *Therefore*s upon your hopes? Bring them in, I beseech you, before the Lord this day, and let us see what they are. There is a great deal of hope goes up and down the world. In the worst times, there was much hope stirring abroad, people hoped things would mend; all would be better; but in the mean while, they were never the better for their hopes, nor the times for them. They did hope and swear, hope and prophane Gods day, hope and be drunke, hope and be worldly, proud, contentious, prophane, luke-warm, at the best. Truly we were little beholding to such kinde of hopes: such hopes as these would have made us a hopelesse and a helplesse people

people before this day, had not free grace slept in to our rescue.

Every man is a pretender to hope, men have hopes in Christ, and hopes of pardon, and hopes of heaven, and hopes of happinesse, but what are your *therefores*. Truly the most part of the Therefores that goe up and down the world (yea the Christian world) are carnall Therefores, and gracelesse Therefores, sinfull Therefores, the greatest part of Protestants doe protest against their hopes. Lay before the greatest part of men the best premisses, and they will make unworthy and base Conclusions on them.

Lay before them the consideration of death, and they will therefore to the Taverne, to the Alehouse, *Let us eat and drinke for to morrow we shall dye*, Isai. 22. 13. one would thinke the argument should have run thus, *Let us fast and pray, for to morrow we shall dye*.

Lay before their eyes the mercies of God, and they will conclude vilely, Therefore we need not be so strict, so precise, Therefore we need not pray so much, heare so often, make such a doe about our Salvation.

So in point of dependance, lay before them former experience of Gods Power and Faithfulnesse, and they will make a conclusion unworthy of those premisses, *He smote the rock indeed, and the waters gushed out: but can he prepare a table in the wilderness?* Psal. 78. 10. as if they had said, *He smote the Rock, and the waters gushed out*, therefore he cannot prepare a table in the wilderness. The Apostle gives us the reason of this false disputation in the 4. Ephes. 18. *Having their understandings darkned*, the word in the Greek is *Verba*, which signifies words, the word is all syllogisticall, hee that concludes thus, *He smote the rock, and the waters gushed out, therefore he cannot prepare a table in the wilderness*, hee hath darkned his understanding, and therefore hee cannot see the truth. And therefore I say, lay before them the mercies of God, and they will conclude vilely, Therefore we need not be so strict, so precise, Therefore we need not pray so much, heare so often, make such a doe about our Salvation.

ours, under the standard and conduct of our royall *Iosbna*, upon this mount of God, to judge the mount of *Esau*, all those proud and malicious Edomites, whosoever they be, *who have cryed concerning our Ierusalem, Downe with it, downe with it, even to the ground, that the Kingdome, yea all the three Kingdomes may be the Lords in an everlasting Covenant.*

Now therefore as many of you as doe conceive hopes, that God may be reconciled to the Kingdome, expresse it, I beseech you, by your *Parliament* *therefore*, resolutions and engagements for reformation, wherein that I may in my poore proportion be serviceable to you, give me leave out of this platorme to draw you out

First, some Rules.

Secondly, some motives and encouragements to this great work.

Rules.

1 Rule.

1. Great Reformation must be usher'd in with deep humiliation, heart-breaking confession, *We have sinned against the Lord, and now therefore make confession to the God of your fathers,* vers. 11.

The way for a guilty people, or person, to pacifie an offended God is not to steal to reformation, as the truant steals into the Schoole, but to come into the presence of God, and creep thorough the dust to his feet, and there to spread self-inditements before the Lord; to be open hearted and broken hearted in full and free confession; so did holy *Ezra* here in the 9. chap. he confesseth their sinne with all the aggravating circumstances as might make sinne become exceeding sinfull, as

1. First the multitude, and greatnesse of them, vers. 6. *Our iniquities are increased over our heads, and our transgressions grown up to the heavens.*

2. Secondly, their long continuance in them, vers. 7. *Since the day of our fathers we have been in a great trespass unto this day: that is either from the first time of Reformation, or ever since God had made them a people.*

3. Thirdly, that they had lived in sin against the discoveries of Gods displeasure; they had sinned against judgements, for our iniquities

iniquities have wee, our Kings, and our Priests been delivered into the hands of the Kings of the land, to the sword, to captivity, and to spoyle, and to confusion of face.

Fourthly, against deliverances and mercies; *vers. 8. 9. Now for a little space grace hath been shewn us from the Lord, &c.* Vers. 8. 9.

Fifthly, against expresse command, *vers. 10. 11. We have forsaken thy Commandment which thou hast commanded by thy servants the Prophets.* 5. Vers. 10. 11.

Sixthly, against the choicest motives; God did not leave the commandments naked, and bare, though that had been enough, but seconds it with precious and powerfull arguments, drawn from the purity of his command, *verse 11. The land unto which ye goe to possess it, is an unclean land, and from the advantage of obedience, that ye may be strong, and eat the good of the land, and leave it for an inheritance to your children for ever.*

Seventhly, against the moderation and indulgence of Gods corrections, *vers. 12. seeing our God hath punished us lesse then our iniquities deserve, God did but strike, when he might have destroyed.* 7. Vers. 12.

Eighthly, their Apostacie and residivation, *verse 14. Should we again break the Commandment; they had not sinned in this kind once only, but again and again, they had made one sinne into many by repetition; They deeply bewail both the unreasonablenesse and unkindnesse of their apostacie, should we, &c.* 8.

These and the like are the circumstances wherewith he does load and charge his confession, surely it is so patheticall it will fetch a groane from your spirits to read it, so heart-melting, that it may melt a stony heart; in a word, his confession swims in tears, you cannot chuse but weep to see what rivers of tears he powres out, as if he had obtained *Jeremiahs* wish, and his head had been water, and his eyes a fountains of tears; he takes on, as if he had followed his onely sonne to the grave. A pattern worth our best imitation, for truly by how much the more liquid and watery the humiliation is for sinne, by so much the more zealous and fiery the reformation will be of sin. Hence you shall find that the reformations whether *nationall* or *personall*, that have not flowed from this spring of godly sorrow, have quickly been dried up, like sudden showers, which for the present fill the high wayes with seas of waters, but in a short time are carried away, and leave no impression, nor remembrance behind them; as this people here in my Text.

It seems when they newly came out of captivity, they betook them-

selves to their employments, before they had first humbled their souls, and so quickly fell back into those finnes which had formerly carried them forth into captivity; like those who in the 2. *Jer* 20. when God had broken their yoke from their neck, said they would not transgresse, resolved they would doe so no more, but for want of deep and solid humiliation, upon the first occasion that offered it self, did Apostatize to their former Idolatry. For of old time I have broken thy yoke, and burst thy bonds, and thou saidst, I will not transgresse, when upon every high hill, and under every green tree, thou wanderdest, playing the harlot. The very next occasion and temptation did enslave and betray them to their disavowed Idolatry.

The reason is, because when the heart is not thoroughly broken for sinne, it can never be truly and totally broken from sinne. Breach From sin, begins in the breach For sin; and where the first breach is not made, the second cannot follow. The fault of the first Concoction is not mended in the second.

And therefore, *honour'd Worthies*, you have taken the right course in your Parliamentarie Assemblies to begin your publike reformatiōns with publike humiliations. And blessed be our God, and blessed be our King, and blessed be you for it.

But give me leave, I beseech you, humbly to offer it to your considerations, whether a day be enough to confesse, and bewaile the sinne of *England*? *England* who hath robbed all the neighboring nations of their master sins: *France* of her lightnesse, *Spain* of her pride, *Germany* of her drunkennesse, *Italy* of her revenge, and *Venice* of her wantonnesse, &c. Whether a day be enough to bewail the Sabbath-breaking of *England*, the adulteries of *England*, the pride and wantonnesse, and fulnesse of bread in *England*, the security and formality of *England*, the Idolatry and Popery of *England*, the Apostacie of *England*; the sins of Magistrates, and the sins of Ministers, and the sins of people; the sins of Cities, the sins of Universities, and the sins of the Countries! Is a day sufficient to bewail the sins, that since you first began to rip up this ulcerous body of ours, do daily arise under your hands? and yet as God said to *Ezekiel*, *ch. 8. v. 6. Thou shalt see yet greater abominations then these*: after times shall read the stories of our dayes, and their ears shall glow, and their faces shall blush, their knees smite one against another, their hands tremble, and their bowels even turn into rottennesse within them, and shall not we mourne? shall not we lye in the dust before our God?

And

And yet one thing more let me remember you of; here *Ezra* confesses their fathers sin, as well as their owne, chap. 9. ver. 7. *Sincertho day of our fathers we have been in a great trespassse.*

Men and Brethren, there is sin of our fathers, which we their children (I am afraid) were never yet thoroughly humbled for; the blood (I mean) that was shed in *Queen Mary's* dayes, which hath been either not at all, or but litle bewailed in our publike confessions; the Popery then, and the dregs of it ever since that hath been in our bowels, hath not yet been purged out by solemn Confession and Humiliation. Gods Kalendars are full of these red Letters, *the Saints Holy-dayes*, but our *Sinfull-dayes*, wherein such a Martyr, and such a Martyr did suffer; such a day was *Cranmer* burnt, and such a day did *Latimer* suffer, and such a day did *Bradford* go to the stake, &c. Oh that there might be a day appointed by publike command, for the Nation to shed tears for the blood that was then or at any time since shed in our nation, wherein we might solemnly humble our souls before God for that sin, and intreat the Lord to take the blood which *lies* upon our heads and lay it upon our hearts; lest while we build the sepulchres of the Martyrs, and not bewail their blood, we bear witnesse against our selves, that we are the children of them which killed the Prophets, and all the righteous blood shed in *England*, from the first Reformation to this present time, be required of this generation.

But I humbly submit this to your graver wisdoms, and considerations, while I proceed to the

Second Rule:

Reformation must be *Universall*, *All the wives, with such as are born of them*, there must not be a wife or a childe dispensed withall, in this publike Reformation. Let yours be so, I beseech you, reform all places all persons and callings; reform the Benches of Judgements, the inferior Magistrates, that our officers may be peace, and our exaltors Righteousnesse, that Judgement may run down like a stream, and Injustice like many Waters. Reform the Church, go into the Temple, (the Lord is gone before you) and as he hath done, so do you, overthrow the Tables of these *Money-changers*, whip out them that buy and sell, that buy Livings, and sell Souls; that make two or three cures of Souls nothing but a matter of mercenary exchange.

If you will turn a side with me, I will shew you a nest of uncleane birds, in *Jeremiah* 2. 8. *The Priests said not, Where is the Lord? they*

that handled the Law knew me not, the Pastours also transgressed against me: The Prophets prophesied by Baal, and walked after things that do not profit. You have the Clergie of Israel here distinguished into four classes or orders, and every one of these had their peculiar sin, diametrically opposite to their callings; there were the Priests, whose office it was to offer sacrifice, and to enquire whether God were angry or pleased, whereabouts God was, near unto them, or removed from them.

Secondly, the Scribes, whose proper work it was to handle and expound the Law.

Thirdly, Pastors, whose proper work it was, to instruct and exhort the people in wayes of godlines.

Fourthly, the Prophets, whose peculiar function it was, to foresee and prophesie of things to come, in the name of the Lord.

And their four sins are here also expressed, the Priests were secure, God might go whether he would for all them, he might be betweene the Cherubins, or upon the threshold, or upon the mountaine, angry or pleased, they cared not, the Priests said not, Where is the Lord?

The Scribes, they were ignorant, they knew not God, nor his Lawes, they were not able to give a right exposition of the law of God, witness their false glosses they had put upon the commandments, re-proved and corrected by our Saviour in the fifth of Matthew, They that handled the Law, knew me not.

Prophaneesse in the Pastours, they that should have taught Obedience, by their Doctrine, and by their Lives, were skilfull only to teach Rebellion in Israel. They would sit and drink all day at the Tavern or Alehouse, till they were even ready to burst, Come, said they, we will fetch wine and fill our selves with strong drink, and one drunken meeting begat another, and to morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant. Thus the sins of the Teachers, were the teachers of Sinne; The Pastours transgressed against me.

Isa. 56.12.

Superstition and Idolatry in the Prophets, they pleaded for Baal, prophesied in the name of Baal, and caused the people to forget the name of God, for Baal, Jer. 23.27. The Prophets prophesied by Baal, and walked after things that could not profit. This was the Clergie of Israel. And if such you find in the Clergie of England (and oh that you would make diligent search after them) spare them not I beseech you.

Will

Will you spare Thieves and Robbers? Look into their houses, and there you shall find the bread of the poore and hungry.

Will you spare murderers, look under their skirts, and there you shall find the blood of Innocents, yea the blood of their souls.

Jer. 2. 34.

Physicians say, that that Physick which onely stirs the humours, and does not carry them away, leaves the body worse then it found it.

You have stirred many of these malignant humours, if your physick be not strong enough to purge them out, consider, I beseech you, in what a dangerous condition you leave this body politike.

And yet I must not speak without a distinction, some have sinned (it may be) *seducedly*, whom if otherwise, able and diligent, I commend to your wisdom and compassion.

Others (and that most) have sinned *seducingly*: Priests and Jesuits could never be more desperate, I am sure they might have beene lesse guilty: *these* have been brought up from their infancy in Romish Idolatry, and crueltie; *they* have sinned against their light, and murdered the principles which they have sucked in with their mothers milke. *Hophni* and *Phineas* never were more vile then these *sonnes of Belial*; spare them not, I beseech you, no though they should crouch and cringe, and worship you, as much as they have done their high akars, and vow and swear never to do so again; beleve them not, for what *Nebuchad-nazzar* said to his Magitians, *Dan. 2. 8.* that may I say of these men, *It is but to gain the time of you*, when the Parliament is done they will be drunk again, vile again, and idolatrous again; insult over the poore people, and jeere you to your faces.

I know men will cry out, *Mercie, Mercie*, but oh no *mercie* against poore souls; such *mercie* will be but *sinful murder*.

Consider it men and brethren, if you leave behinde you a godly, faithfull, able ministry, they will build upon your foundation, so that when you come to the work again, you will find the wals of the new Jerusalem blessedly and gloriously raised and prospered; whereas if you leave a prophane, idle, scandalous ministrie, if ever you come to this work again, you will finde all your labour and cost carried away, as it were with a spring tide of prophanenesse and superstition; you will be still to begin your work of reformation *de novo*, and never get beyond the foundation, and well it may stand.

Oh shew no mercy therefore, to pull guilt and blood upon your own heads: now the guilt is theirs, if you let them goe, you will translate their

their guilt upon your own souls. You remember what the Prophet told *Ahab*, 1 *Kings* 20. 42. *Because thou hast let go out of thy hand, a man whom I appointed to utter destruction, therefore thy life shall go for his life, and thy people for his people.* Ah Brethren, I would not have you redeem their lives, with your own heads; their blood be upon their own pates, their wickednesse be upon their own souls; but upon the King, and Parliament, and the Kingdom, let there be Righteousnesse and peace for ever from the Lord.

Take away out of the house of God, the lame and blinde; the lame in their lives, and the blinde in their doctrine, whom Gods soul hates.

Reform the Universities, which we may complaine, as the men of *Iericho* did of their habitation 2 *Kings* 2. 19. *The situation is pleasant, but the water is naught, and the ground barren:* Some have been casting in their *person*, do you cast in *salt*, that those waters may be healed, and there may not be from henceforth any more death or barren land.

Reform the Cities, reform the Countries, reform i inferior Schools of Learning; reform the Sabbath, reform the Ordinances, the worship of God, &c. Alas, Fathers and Brethren, I pittie you, and (as well as I can) I shall pray for you; you have more work to do then I can speak, The Lord help you, *the mighty God of Iacob be with you.*

Give me leave onely to present to you the *Epitome* and *compendium* of your great work, summ'd up by our Saviour, *Matthew* 13. 12. *Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up.* Behold here a double *Universality* of number and extent.

Every plant, be it what it will, though it be never so like a flower, though it seems as beautifull as the *Lily*, which *Solomon* in all his robes could not outshine. *Every plant*, whether it be *thing*, or *person*, or *order*, or *ornament*, whether in *Church* or in *Common-wealth*, where ever, what ever, if not planted of God, you must look to it, not to *prune* it onely, or *slip* it, or *cut* it; so the *Hyssop* and the *Time*, and the wholesome herbs must be dealt withall, when they are grown luxurient; but *pull'd up*. (That is the *second universality*;) *Not broken off*; then it may grow, and sprout again; but *pull'd up* by the very roots. If it be not a plant of Gods planting, what do's it in the Garden? out with it, root and branch, *every plant, and every whis of every plant.*

Yea, if the plant have been venomous, if you take away some of the soil that hath made it so rank, it will not doe amiss.

Heylin in his *Geography*, page 55. quotes a passage out of the *Spanish*

Spanish History, of the Inhabitants of *Biscay*, who bearing a naturall Antipathy against Bishops (on what ground he do's not informe us) when *Ferdinand* the King came to them, accompanied with the *Bishop of Pampeluna*, they arose in arms, drave back the *Bishop*, and gathering together all the dust whereon his Mule had trod, they threw it into the Sea.

You may make use of this *passage*, by way of Analogy, in your Reformation; Take away Popery by the very root, and the earth in which it hath unhappily grown and prosper'd thus long; Altars, Crosses, Crucifixes, with all the trash of Popish Ceremonies, Orders and Ordinances whatsoever, which may be found in your wise and faithfull enquiry, to have ministred fatnesse and lust to this cursed weed.

The third Rule.

This Reformation must be done by the *running of Covenant*; never was *solemn Reformation* but by *solemn Covenant*. *A Covenant* 3. Rule. *is the bond and seale of Reformation*, as Gods Covenant with us is the bond and seale of his mercie and truth: *that by two immutable things* his word and his oath, *in which it is impossible for God to lye, we might* Heb. 6.18. *have strong consolation*. But this was solidly proved, and prudently limited, and lively pressed by those Reverend Divines, whom your wisdome selected for the late worke of Humiliation. I shall onely crave leave to adde one consideration more, to what was then delivered, and that out of the platforme here before us.

This *Covenant* here, was not a *Covenant* silently struck up, between God and every mans Conscience in secret, while they were preaching and praying; but after those duties were finished, they did binde themselves to this publike Reformation by a *publike instrument*, *under their hand and seale*, you may see them setting *their hand* to it, *vers. 18. and sealing it*, or another like it, *Neb. 9. ult. And because of all this, we make a sure Covenant, and write it, and our Princes, Levites and Priests seale unto it*. A sure Covenant indeed, *written, subscribed, and sealed*; and if that be not enough, you may finde them *entering into an oath*, to make it like the Lawes of the Medes and Persians, *unalterable, verse 29*. And this was not done in a lump, but distinctly, every man in his owne person, and their names after-

ward registred in their book of *Chronicles*, as you may see in the following Chapter, from the first to the 29. verse.

Oh that you would be pleased to take it into your most grave consideration, whether such a *Covenant against Poperie, and Sabbath profanation*, as verse 31. or the *toleration* of either, be not necessary to set up, as an Iron wall, and gates of Brasse, against all the incounters and invasions of *Rome*, and hell, that both Houses of Parliament, with the Magistrates and Ministers of the land; (and if it may seeme good in your eyes) the whole Kingdome might *subscribe* and *seale a Covenant*, to enter into a curse, and into an oath, *verse 29.* never to endeavour the setting up of Popery any more, or to admit of Papists into places of skill and trust in Church and Common-wealth; that what some would have done in *mockery*, may now be done in *good earnest*; as some would have made an *Oath against Poperie*, on purpose (it may be) to have *brought in Popery*; so now there may be a *sure Oath and Covenant* made, which through the grace and goodnesse of our God, may *keep out Poperie*, from invading us, or our children for ever.

We have a *covenanting God*, a *covenanting Christ*, the *Covenant* is written in the *blood of the Lambe*, and *sealed with the two broad seals* of the Sacraments; Now therefore let us in this kinde be a *covenanting people*, let us *write*, and *seale*, and *sweare a Covenant*, and hang it up before the Lord, among the great Records and Monuments of the Kingdome.

I come to the fourth Rule.

4. Rule.

Fourthly, *this Reformation must be punctuall. And let it be done according to the Law*: This Law was then nothing else but Gods own immediate command, while he held the government of this people in his own hand.

And therefore where the Laws are made by men, subject to mistake and errour, who are short sighted, and therefore cannot fore-see all the inconveniences of future emergencie: *Reformation* must not be done onely *according to the Law*, but there must be a *Reformation also of the Laws themselves*, when need requires.

Reformers must to the Law and to the Testimony, to the counsels and oracles of God in his word, *if they speak mee*, and do not *according to*

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this

this word, it is because there is no light in them. It is for want of Gospel light, if they doe not reforme according to Gospel rules: And therefore I beseech you in your reformation take the word along with you, As a lamp unto your feet, and a light unto your paths.

All matters concerning Religion may be reduced to this dichotomy, Doctrine and Discipline, now in reforming of either, I beseech you repaire to the word, and from thence take unto your selves such sound and solid Principles as shall steere your courses through this great sea, so as you may not dash upon the rocks nor strike upon the quicksands of heresie and superstition.

Now in matter of Doctrine, if any should aske with Pilate, *Ioh. 18. 38. What is truth?* give me leave to furnish you with a few Principles among many, whereby as by a touchstone, you may be able to separate the precious from the vile, to distinguish the precious truths of Christ from the vile errors and lies of Antichrist.

The first discovery of Gospel Truth may be this, That which makes most for the exalting of God, and abasing the creature; this being Gods great project, *1 Corin. 1. 29. 30. that no flesh may glory in his presence: But as it is written, he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.*

Now by this Principle you may judge of many Doctrines in controversie, for which makes most for this purpose, either the Doctrine of free Election out of the mere good will and pleasure of God, or that which bottoms this glorious act of God from eternitie upon works foreseene or faith foretold? either that Doctrine which puts the great worke of Conversion into the sole Power and Pleasure of God, or that which places it in the self-preparations of the creature.

Secondly, that Doctrine hath the stamp and Character of Truth upon it, which makes most for the Advancing of Holinesse. For you know whose Command and Counsell it is, *Mat. 5. 48. Be you perfect, as your heavenly father is perfect.*

Now which suits most with this Principle, either the Doctrine which calls men to the *frill* (antithetion of the Lords day, or that which gives them liberty to profane it.

That Doctrine which incites, and engages men to *frill* walking and the power of Godliness, or that which secures, and applauds them in naked and empty shewes of *Leke-warmnesse* and *formality*; That

*Eph. 5. 15
22 Tim.
3. 5.

God which answers by fire, let him be God, was Eliab's rule for the discovery of the true God, 1 Kings 18. 24. that Doctrine also which answers by fire, let that be the rule for the triall and discovery of the truth of God; that Doctrine which hath most fire of Holinesse, and zeale in it, let that be truth.

Thirdly, that Doctrine hath the Image and Superscription of the Truth upon it, which makes most to the magnifying of the great mystery of godlinesse, God manifest in the flesh, John 5. 22. 23. For the father hath committed all Iudgement to the son, that all men should honour the son, as they honour the father.

God had never suffered Adam to have fallen, had it not beene to bring his sonne Iesus Christ, into the greater reputation with the sonnes of men; Now which conduces to this end most, either the Doctrine of Free will, or the Doctrine of free grace, Iustification by works, or Iustification by faith alone: that Doctrine which makes faith the master of Iustification, or that which makes faith the instrument only, laying hold upon the righteousness of Christ, imputed by God unto the beleever? that Doctrine which makes Christ a perfect Saviour, or that which makes him a partiall Saviour, that which sets him up in one office only, or that which sets him up in all his Offices, convincing men of the absolute necessity of Iesus Christ, not onely for the pardon of sinne, but for the conquest and subduing of sinne?

Fourthly, That is truth, which serves most to settle and establish the hearts of Gods people in the assurance of Gods love, and to fill them, with peace and joy in beleiving. Heb. 6. 18. God is abundantly willing that the heires of Promise should have strong consolation. Now which is most likely to doe this to purpose, that Doctrine which teaches the unchangeablenesse of the Covenant, (as in the fore-quoted place, Heb. 6. 18.) or that which teacheth the possibility of totall and finall falling away from Grace. The Doctrine which affirms Iesus Christ hath satisfied God his father for all sinne, or that which teacheth that Christ hath satisfied for originall sin only, and leaves man to make his own peace with God for all sinne?

Can any of the vanity of the Gentiles cause ruine? Ier. 24. 22. so may I say, Can any of these vaine Doctrines of Popes and Arminians afford one drop of comfort to refresh the thirsty gaping soul? nay verily, miserable comforters are they all: but of the contrary doctrines

Erimes I may say with the Prophet, *With joy may you draw water out of these wells of salvation*, *Isai. 12. 3.*

But the greatest difficulty will be concerning Discipline and Church-government; for, *hinc illa lachryma*, hence those unhappy disputes, and conflicts, and divisions, which have in this latter age of the Christian world miserably tome and distracted the Church.

But herein also to the *Law*, and to the *testimony*, goe to the *Word* for sound and solid *Principles* for your directions, in this part of your great and laborious work.

For my part, I could be content with *Calvine* to saile over 20. Seas, to finde out a distinct *plat forme* of Evangelicall Discipline, in all the branches and circumstances thereof; but because this worke is of such a vast latitude, I shall onely content my selfe with propounding one *generall rule*; humbly desiring you to consider whether the Apostle in those words, *1 Cor. 11. 16. We have no such custome, nor the Churches of Christ*; make not the *custome* and *practice* of those *Churches*, which are most *pura* and *Orthodox*; a leading *President* for their imitation that are in the pursute of peace and truth; with whom since we doe happily professe a *union in faith*; how much it will conduce to beautie, peace, and welfare, to enjoy also, a *uniformity in discipline*, I humbly leave to your wisdom to judge, while I betake my selfe to the fifth and last rule, which arises from the first words of my text.

Fifthly, therefore *Reformation must be speedy*; this as it was *Stochas* counsell, so it was *Ezra's* practice, for verse the 5. and verse the 6. *Then arose Ezra, then*; that is, he used no delay, he went presently about the worke, he knew it was good striking while the iron was hot, the Princes and people were now in a good temper, pliable and impressionable; if *Ezra* had deferred it, it may be new discouragements, and fears would have risen; The sinne peradventure would have appeared lesse evil, and they have grown more unwilling and refractory, as we may see in that sad instance, *Jer. 41.* from the first verse to the fifth verse, where you may see a people that came red-hot to *Sennacherib*, one would have thought with an unconquerable resolution, to have followed the counsell of God, by his mouth, *wherein it were good to evil*; yet notwithstanding first *cooled* into shifts and excuses, and at length

length quencht, and hardened into flat rebellion, and contradiction, for in the 43. Chap. 2. 3. they pretend that it was not the word of God, that they should not goe to sojourn in Egypt. *The Lord hath not spoken unto thee saying, Goe not, &c.* no nor *Jeremiah* neither; they would faine flatter him, as if he were a more milde and moderate man, and would never have given such counsell, had he not been set on by *Baruch* that young passionate Hot-spurre, who for want of his preferments, sought the ruine and desolation of the whole Kingdome, in delivering them into the hands of the Babylonians, that they might put them to death; but at length when these fig-leaves could serve no longer to cover their nakednesse, but they must needs be convinc't, it was the very message, which the Prophet brought from the lips of God, in the 44. Chap. 16. verse, they embolden and imbrazen themselves into down-right refusals and rebellion.

As for the word which thou hast spoken to us in the name of the Lord, we will not hearken unto it.

As if they should have said, be it *Baruch*, or be it *Jeremy*, or be it God himselfe, it is all one, we will not obey this message, we will not be such fooles to stay here, and have our throats cut by the Babylonians; but we will shift for ourselves, to Egypt will we go, say *Baruch*, or thou, or God, what you will.

Honoured and Honourable Worthies, be cautioned, I beseech you by such a dreadfull, and startling instance; and take the first opportunities and advantages in this great and solemn work in hand. *Mens* are mutable, and *adversaries* industrious, and length of time will flay and coole mens spirits, there is little got by delays, unlesse it be unfitness and indisposition. And therefore I beseech you, take the now for the dispatch, and perfecting of the Kingdome ture. Leave as little as may be of it for future Parliaments; It was our misery, and might have been (without miraculous providence) our ruine, that the first reformers left so much of the work for after ages to doe; we have left rather then gained of our first reformation.

We will therefore expect little *De future*, if this present opportunitie dye in your hands, and the work be left imperfect, at least in the essentials of it.

And therefore *holy brethren*, partakers of this *now only calling*, arise & fall to the work in good earnest, the sooner the better.

And yet not with more haste then good speed; what you doe, doe with

his hopefull seed, that his name may be great and terrible abroad, and his beams of sweet, warm, and precious influence at home, like the Sun to the creatures, or the rain to the new mown grasse.

2. Motive. *Of those that tremble at the commandment of our God. The suits and cries of trembling hearts that tremble at sin and wrath, is a strong motive to Governours to put on to Reformation.*

Do not the petitions of the trembling people of God throng in upon you from all parts of the Kingdome, Cities, Countreys, particular Congregations? and what do they call and cry for, but *Reformation, Reformation; For the Lords sake take off our burthens, the civill burthens that lye upon our shoulders; the spiritual burthens (especially) that lye upon our Consciences. The yoke which neither we nor our fathers are able to bear. Down with Ceremonies and up with pure Ordinances, down with formalitie, and set up the power of Godliness; take away the chaffe and give us wheat; (for what is the chaffe to the wheat?) take away shadows and give us substance; remove from us our prophane and scandalous Ministers, and give us Pastors according to Gods owne heart, that may reveale unto us the whole counsell of God; Restore the Sabbath with all the ordinances of it, to its purity and splendor, that our eyes may see Jesus Christ riding in triumph in the midst of our Congregations; Oh pitie our souls, our Wives souls, our Childrens souls, our Servants souls; pitie our estates, pitie our bodies, our liberties, but above all pitie our Souls.*

Men and Brethren, these cries have pierc'd the Heavens, and entered into the cares of the Lord of Sabbath, oh let them enter into your cares, and pierce through your very hearts, let your bowels be troubled within you, your compassions be rouled together.

It tell you, if it were but the petition of a hundred, or ten, or foure, or two, or one trembling heart, that trembles at sinne, and trembles at wrath, it should prevail more with you, then the petitions of thousands and millions of thousands of such prophane and secure spirits that lay neither sinne nor judgement to heart; the Kingdome might have sunk or swum for ought they care, Popery and prophanenesse, false Religion, or no Religion, Atheisme, Barbarisme, and what not, might have over-run the Kingdome like an inundation and they, like *Gallio*, have cared for none of these things; so they might have had what they would, and done what they list.

They

They are the *tremblers* to whom we are beholding under God, and the King, that all is not run into sad and dismall confusion.

And therefore, *holy Brethren*, doe you resemble your holy God, who with his owne mouth hath promised, *Isaiah 66. 2. To this man will I looke*, what man is this (think you) that God will looke to of all the men in the world? surely some *great man*, some *mighty man*! no, even to him that is *poore* and of a *contrite spirit*, and that *trembles at my word*: Mark yee, he doth not say to this Kingdome, or to this Citie, or this Congregation, or this Family, but to *this man*, &c. So that if there be but one in a family, or one in a City, or one in a Kingdome, that trembles at the word of God, that trembles at the word of command, least he should *sinne against it*; that trembles at the word of threatening, least it should *fall upon him*; that trembles at the word of promise, least he should *fall short of it*, as Heb. 4. 1. In a word, that trembles at *sin*, because *contrary to God*; and trembles at *wrath*, because *contrary to a people*, Levit. 26. 40. God will have respect to that man, when he will overlook, and despise whole Cities and Kingdomes of secure and carnall wretches.

Will God look towards *one* trembler, oh do you look towards *those many*, that throng your sacred Senate with their prayers and tears for reformation; that by your piety and compassion that may be accomplished towards them, that God hath promised in *Isaiah 66. 5. verse. Hear the word of the Lord, yee that tremble at his word, your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my names sake, said, let the Lord be glorified, (curled Hypocrites, while they persecuted Gods people, pretended Gods glory) but good newes follows, He shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed.*

Cassander, a man that was Pontificall enough, writing to *Ferdinand* the first, and *Maximilian* the second about reformation, among other considerable passages, doth ingenuously confesse, that things will never go well in the Church, till those that sit at the helm lay aside their own wills, and *hearkening to the cries and cautions of the Godly*, will reform abuses according to the rule of the word.

Thirdly, may you please to cast your eyes upon the fourth *verse*, and I will leave you in your own thoughts to create to your selves a double motive.

Extras duty, and the Princes and peoples assistance, It belongs to thee, we also will be with thee: it belongs to thee, the work is Gods, and

In consult.
de Religi-
one, cap.
de Eccle-
sia.

it is thy duty to do it. *Honorable Senators*, let me bespeak you in the same language, it is a *good work* you are about, a *glorious work*, that may invite; but it belongs unto you, this may command. It is not arbitrary whether you will reform or no. *God*, and the *King*, and the *people*, have called you forth from the severall parts of the Kingdome to this great work, so that *incumbis necessitas*, a necessity is laid upon you, and was be to you if you reform not.

Therefore let me bespeak you, as *Mordecai* did his neece *Esther*, the Queen, that if you altogether hold your peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the people of God from another place. God can doe his work without a Parliament, but that is dreadfull that follows, you and your Fathers houses shall be destroyed; you shall ruine yourselves, and your posterity for ever: but if you shall indeed fall to the work in good earnest, with resolutions and affections futable to so honourable a designe, God shall build your houses, and blesse your posterities, and make your name as a precious perfume to all succeeding generations, so that you shall be called the repairer of breaches, and the restorer of desolate places to dwell in.

We also will be with thee.

The Nobles will be with you, the People with you, Ministers will be with you, enow with you; the wisdom will be to know, whose helpe to take; for you shall have *Tobias* and *Sanballatt*, and &c. with you, that will offer their helpe in building the Temple. But take heed what you doe, their aime is to hinder the work, not to further it: accept not of mungrell helpe, to so holy a work; such as are erroneous in judgement, or irregular in their lives: they that have sinned against the rule, will they (think you) reform according to the rule? they that would not keep things up with their owne rule, (such as it was) doe you beleewe they will cordially concur to the mending or making of the rule, such as it should be?

Well be of good courage, honoured Worthies, and doe it, the work needs your best skill, and confidence; for it is a worke of great difficulty, you will meet with many doubts, objections and discouragements; But let me tell you one thing for your comfort, you cannot meet with more objections, then *Ezra*, and the Princes might have doe, in this work here in hand; alas what pleading of wives? what cries of children? what workings of naturall affection? how might the wife have hung about the husbands neck, and have pleaded for her

, her selfe, *Oh my deare husband, have not I been your wife these many yeares, and will you now put me away? have you ever found me disloyal, all to your bed, or disobedient to your will?* how might the children, have hung about their fathers knees, and cryed, *Oh my father, my father, have you not brought me into the world, and will you now turn me loose to seek my fortunes?* have I been a waister of your estate? or a reproch to your family? or a rebell to your commands? *In the mean while,* how might the husbands, and fathers Affections have wrought, and his heart have bled, and his soul been torn within him, as is pathetically described there in that sad parting of the religious *Marquessa Galeacius Caracciolus* from his Lady and Children? what arguments might have been alledged against such a thing as this? why it seemed to be, *against naturall affection,* No man ever hated his owne flesh, but loveth and cherisheth it; *Contrary to the Covenant,* and contract between man and wife, *Prov. 2. 17.* at their marriage.

Contrary to the Law of God, who saith, *I hate putting away,* Mal. 2. 16.

Beside how might they have pleaded the *difficuly of the worke,* it had been (it seems) a matter of a long continuance, how many evill consequences might have ensued, so many wives and children to be turned a begging? what grievous *murmuring* of friends and kindred might it beget.

, My Sister must be turned away, might one say, and another, my Neece and her children must be thrust out of doors to get their bread where they can finde it: what fearefull censures abroad among the Heathen; how might they have taken occasion to *reproach* this people, curse their Religion, and blaspheme their God, saying, These be your Jewes, the onely people of God, and yet doe worse then ever any heathen did, who ever did heare of such a thing among us, as the putting away of wives and children, in so mercilesse and unnatural manner? they pretend Religion, but there is no more pittie, nor mercie, nor Justice among them, then among so many divels, no bands will binde them, no cords of relation or affection will hold them.

How might it have hindered the conversion of the heathen, who might have said, If this be their Religion, we will be no Jewes; If their God teach them to doe thus, he shall be none of our God, and as the poore Indians said of the Spaniard, *If they goe to heaven, we will goe to hell.*

What confusion might it have occasioned in the Common-wealth? yea, how might it have armed all the Countreies round about them, so that what Jacob said to his sons concerning their cruell slaughter of the circumcised Shechemites, might these men have objected against this work.

We shall make our selves sink among the inhabitants of the land, amongst the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, and we being few in number, they shall gather themselves together against us, and slay us, and then we shall be destroyed, we, and our houses. These and the like objections might have been made; but what of all this and a thousand times more, if God will have it so, it must be done; there is no difficultie, nor objection against God, *Does the work they ought, and therefore do the work they would,* and let God shift for the rest, and therefore Courage, courage, Noble Christians, you have a good cause, the Cause of Christ, good Companie, multitudes of prayers, like Jacobs Angels going up to heaven, every day in great assemblies, for you; be of good cheere, the enemies of Reformation cannot pray, swear they can and curse, they can drink healths (it may be) to your confusion, but pray they cannot, at the best can but read prayers and say prayers, but pray they cannot. And therefore, if such and the like objections meet you in this work, be not afraid or startled, be not faint-hearted, or short spirited; you have moreover, a good Captain, whose presse money you have taken, who shall resolve your doubts, answer your objections, conquer your difficulties, confound your enemies, crowne your endeavours, and make you more then conquerours, thorough him that hath loved you, the Lord is gon before you, go on and prosper.

The second
branch of
Exhortation.

And thus I have done with that branch of exhortation which concerns this honourable assembly. I come now to the second branch which respects every one that stands here before God this day, yea the whole people of the land. England hath been a long time sinfull England (as you have seene) and is it not yet hopelesse England? Is there yet hope of Peace and Unitie betwixt the two Nations, who were but lately ready to dig one anothers graves, and to sheath their swords in one anothers bowels; yea hopes of a more firme and glorious peace then ever? is there yet hopes that the oppressour shall cease, and that the yoke shall be taken off from our necks which neither we nor our fathers are able to beare, that the Canaanite shall be destroyed out of our land;

lands; Is there yet hopes that our eyes shall see our teachers, that our ears shall heare a voice behinde us, saying, *This is the way walke in it, when you turn to the right hand, and when you turn to the left.* Have we yet hope to enjoy our Sabbaths, pure Congregations, and holy ordinances; that our eyes shall see the King in his beantie, and the glory of Christ, in our assemblies? In a word, is there hopes that God will be pacified towards us, and be reconciled to us, and dwell among us, and be our God, and the God of our children? or are we in a dream, (as the people of God sing in the 1:6. Psalm, first verse) are you sure that England is yet alive? are you sure that there is a Parliament, of as rich, and precious hopes as ever since England was first called Christian? are you sure, that you are here in the presence of God, that I am speaking, and you are hearing this day from heaven the things that concern your everlasting peace: oh how comes this to passe this day in England, that England should be yet alive, that was so neare the giving up of the Ghost? free grace, free grace: where sin hath abounded, there grace hath superabounded: but what then, shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? let every one that fears the Lord cry, God forbid, hear else what an angry question God doth aske that spared and delivered people, Jer. 7. 9. 10. *Will you steale, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and walk after other Gods, whom ye know not, and come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my Name, and say, We are delivered to doe all these abominations? Oh my Christian brethren, look to your therefore (for Christs sake) look to your therefore, say not in your heart, there is hope in Israel, there is hope in England, now therefore we may to our purchasing again, we may raise our rents, and hoyst the price of corn, now we shall buy cheap, and sell deare, now we shall grow rich, and lay up much every yeare, and get great estates for our children; now we may wear brave cloths, and vie who shall be finest, now we may eat, and drink, and take our pleasures, fill our selves with love, and satisfie our own lusts to the utmost. All danger is past, storms are over, we now shall have fair weather. Doe you thus requite the Lord, Oh foolish people and unkind? nay, my brethren, doe not so wickedly against the Lord; this is not the fruit which he expects from this tree of hope which he hath planted among you; these be not the therefore which Christians should make upon such precious premisses, whether there is hope in England, now therefore let us put away our wives,*

that is, let us put away *our sinnes*, to which we have married *our selves* so long; let the drunkard say, yet there is *hope* in England, therefore let me put away my *drunkenness*; the unclean person say, therefore let me put away my *uncleanness*; the worldling, let me put away my *worldly mindedness*; the secure wretch, let me put away my *security*, &c. In a word, let every man writ a bill of divorce, and put away his *lusts*, there is *hope*, and therefore let us reforme, there is *hope*, therefore let us study how to be more holy, to be more humble, more thankfull, more spirituall, more fruitfull, more usefull, every one in his station.

Though *hopes* come in without a *therefore* of former *merits*, and *self-preparation*, they do not come in without a *therefore* of future *service* and *reformation*. I would have every one that hath the name of Christian upon him, be afraid, lest God should be a looser by this *mercie*, lest we should dishonour him with his own goodnesse.

Consider Brethren, it had been better *Papists* should have dishonoured God then *Protestants*, that the *Patrons of free will* should have blasphemed his name, then the *Professours of free grace*: oh study *therefore* worthy of your *hopes*, for else

2.

Secondly, God may quickly spoyle our hopes, if God see us every one study his owne *therefores*, the *fleshes therefores*, the *worlds therefores*, the *devils therefores*, and not *Christs*. Consider that in the 9. of *Exra* 13. 14. After all this is come upon us for our evil deeds, seeing our God hath punished us lesse then our iniquities deserve, and hath given such deliverance as this: Should we again break his *Commandments*, &c. from whence you may observe comparing these two verses together, the 8. and 9. verses, that the *unhappy seeds of a people or Churches ruine, and desolations*, may be sowne in the happy spring of their *revivings and enlargements*. You shall finde in the Booke of *Judges* that the people of *Israel* after their great deliverances, and rescues from captivity, fell quickly back to their wonted *prophaness* and *Idolatry*, to doe evil in the sight of the Lord, and God as quickly had a rod, a scourge, a whip, a Tyrant to plague them; three times you shall find it in the third, and beginning of the fourth chapters of *Judges* The children of *Israel* did evil again in the sight of the Lord, chap. 3. 7. and 12. and chap. 4. 1. and God wanted not an oppressor, a persecutor to scourge, and scourge them withall.

First, *Cushan-Rishathaim*, ver. 8. and when he was gone, an *Eglon*, ver. 12. and when he was taken away, a *Iabin*, chap. 4. 2. and after
him

him another and another, till at length God removed them out of his presence. The beginning of *Salomons* reigne was the most glorious time that ever *Israel* saw, when surely, if ever, they might have promised themselves secure and unchangeable prosperity; and yet *Salomon* falling away, and the people with him, that *sunshine* began quickly to be clouded, and their glory to be eclipsed, 1 Kings 11. 14. The Lord stirred up an adversary unto *Salomon*, *Hadad the Edomite*. And he increasing his Idolatry, God increased his adversaries, for, verse the 23. God stirred up another adversary, *Rezon the sonne of Eliadab*. Brethren, if our hope should come in and our comfort revive upon us, let us not think our selves secure, let us not say with *Agag*, Surely the bitterness of death is over, the work will goe on alone, I may take my pleasure: for if God see us studying our own unworthy and sinfull ends, and not his holy and blessed aimes, God can quickly stirre up adversaries against us, one after another, God can quickly send *Turk* and *Pope* against us; God can raise up *Spaine* or *France* as an adversary to us; Yes, how easily may God let in an evil spirit among our selves that may divide the two Nations, the two houses of Parliament; yea that may divide the King from the subject, and the Subjects among themselves, people against people, Ministers against Ministers, Countrey against Countrey in a wofull and desperate confusion.

In the 22. *Iosh. 18*. See what a speedy execution of wrath there is feared upon the setting up of a sinfull altar (as they conceived) though they had but newly taken possession of the promised land, saith *Ioshua*, And it will be, seeing ye have rebelled against the Lord to day, to morrow he will be wroth against the whole Congregation of *Israel*, quick work indeed! to day sin, and to morrow wrath. Oh that we could be so holily jealous of the wrath of God, to feare lest this dayes sin might turn our present joy into the morrowes sorrow.

But you will surely say, I am but one, things may goe well enough. Object. for all me, God will not look after me in such a croud, I need not trouble my self, what I doe will neither helpe nor hinder.

Who then, if not thou? if none need to reforme, that is but one, Answer. who shall reforme?

Secondly, but know, I beseech you, that one mans sin may hinder they welfare of an whole Kingdome: consult that emphaticall place, *Eccles. 9. last. Wisdom is better then weapons of warre, i. e. Wisdom will do more then many weapons of warre; one wise Parliament, or one*

see Jer. 15. 4

*
*Angelicall thus much
 that God may be wroth
 with a whole Congrega-
 tion, for the syn of one
 particular person.*

one wise man in a Parliament or a Kingdom may doe more for the safe-
 tie of a Kingdome, then an *whole armie*, and legions of souldiers; but
 that is dreadfull which followes, *one sinner destroyeth much good*. All
 that *weapons*, and *wisdome* it selfe can do, *sin*, and the sin but of *one*,
 may suddenly *destroy*, one drunkard, one Sabbath-breaker, one adul-
 terer, one Apostate, may in one day pull down that, which a whole
 Parliament hath been in building many weeks. *Achan* was but *one*,
 and yet he *troubled* the whole host of Israel, *Shall one man sin*, (saies
Moses to God,) *Num. 16. 22.* and wilt thou be wroth with the whole
Congregation? *Moses* understood the myserie, and knew that the con-
 spiracie of *Corah* might have been the confusion of Israel had not he
 stood in the gap.

Obi. 2. I but you will say, there be *many wicked men*, yea *many wicked*
Ministers too, and yet for all that the Kingdome is not destroyed?

Ans. 1. What God does by vertue of his *free grace*, is no tie, or obligation
 upon God, that he should do so still, you see one mans sin *hath been*,
 and therefore it *may be* still the losse of a Kingdome; and if *thou* should-
 est bee *that one*, oh when the Parliament should break up, and fire and
 sword over-run the land, in the midst of such sad combustions, and
 confusions how wouldst thou look, when God and conscience shall
 tell thee, as the Prophet there tels those filthy priests, *This hath been*
by your meanes, *Mal. 1. 9.* This hath been by thy *means*, *thou swearer*,
thou drunkard, *thou unclean person*, I might have had my Church still
 in England, if it had not been for *thee*, the Parliament might have been
 an *happy*, and *glorious Parliament*, if it had not been for *thee*, oh bring
 not upon your selves the bloud of a whole Kingdome.

Secondly, but suppose through *free grace*, God should not suffer
 thy sinne, to divert his gracious purpose, and blast our hopes: yet
 thou shalt be never the better for all the good that God shall doe to
 his people. I protest from the Lord, *Ier. 17. 5. 6.* *When Good com-
 meth*, when Christ is set up in his Ordinances, and the Lord shall reigne
 gloriously among his Saints, *thou shalt not see it*, or if thou doe, *Mercie*
 it self shall *undoe thee*: that is the thing I would have you consider and
 tremble at, *None but the purged and the refined ones shall be able to stand*
before the approach of mercie, For instance, see *Mal. 3. 2.* *But who may*
abide the day of his comming? and *who shall stand when he appeareth?*
Who shall be able to endure it? What day? what comming? what ap-
 pearance? Surely not his coming in his flaming fire to render vengeance
 upon

upon his adversaries, but *his coming in his swaddling clothes*, in the depth of meeknesse and humility; you may know it by his *Messenger*, verse the first, *Behold, I will send my Messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me*: which Christ himself expounds of *Iohn the Baptist*. Mat. 11. 10. so that if *Iohn* be the *Messenger*, Christ must be the *Lord*, and that in his humiliation and obscurity, and yet few were able to endure *this coming*: for we see how the very report of it troubled *Herod*, and put all *Ierusalem* into an uproare, *Matth. 2. 3.* and in processe of time, how the presence and preaching of Christ did scorch and blast those *Cathedral Priests*, that unhallowed generation of *Scribes* and *Pharisees*; and perfected their rebellion into that unpardonable sinne, against the holy Ghost. In a word, it is not *Iudgement* onely, but *mercie* it selfe, that will *undo* a people whom the approch of Gods Salvation doth finde and settle in their securitie, and wilfull neglect of Reformation. Therefore reforme, I beseech you, let *England* reforme; let every one reforme himself and his family. Let that which comes good newes from the Parliament house, goe up good newes to heaven; as you would have *Parliament* reformation, make *joy on earth*, so let *nationall*, and *personall* reformation make *joy in heaven*; Oh if it might be reported in heaven that *England* is reformed, — that such a drunkard, such a swearer, such a covetous man, such a secure wretch is become a new man, what joy would it cause among the Angels of God? how would God himself delight in us, and reioyce over us, and think his mercie well bestowed! And therefore for your direction also herein, give me leave to apply to this purpose two or three of the former rules.

Mat. 12.
24. 34

Rules.

First, this your Reformation must be *universall*. *All the wives, and* 1 Rule
them that are burn of them. My beloved Christians, you must deale thoroughly and faithfully in reforming your selves and your families. Will you aske me how far? I will answer you onely thus; as you would have the *Parliament* to reforme above: so doe you reforme below, in what extent and latitude, you would have the Church reformed, and the Common-wealth reformed, reforme your families, reforme your selves.

In the Common-wealth, you would not have onely the *great oppressions* of *Ship-money*, and other illegall taxations removed, but the *lesser Monopolies* upon smaller commodities taken away. In the

Church you would not have the Masse of Idolatry and Popery only cast out, but the smaller ware of *Romish* trumperies and *Ceremonies* abolished, you would not have *Church. tyrants* pared onely, and *limited*, and *moderated*, but *pull'd up by the very roots*: Now then do you thus every one in his own station, draw God (as I may say) a *plat-form* and a *modell* of the reformation you would have above, in your owne domestique and personall reformations; with what measure you meet shall be meet to you again; content not your selves with *limited sin*, and *moderated sin*, but labour for the very *extirpation* of sin, pull it up by the *roots*, let nothing satisfie thee but the very *death* of thy *corruptions*, the *destruction* of that *body of sin*, which thou carriest about thee. *Abstain not only from great sin, but from small sin, yea from the very appearance of sin, and the God of peace sanctifie you wholly, and I pray God that your whole spirit, soule and body may be kept blamelesse unto the coming of our Lord Iesus Christ.*

2 Thes. 5.

22.

2 Rule.

Secondly, it must be done *according to the Law*: Take the *Word* my brethren, and lay it before you, *compare* your selves with it, and *conform* your selves to it; doe not examine and reform your selves by the *world*, but by the *word*; consider not what other men doe, but what the rule is they and you should doe. The Apostle himself will not suffer Christians to follow him, without a limitation, which is so farre as he follows *Christ*, 1 Cor. 11:1. *Be ye followers of me, as I am of Christ*, if you find him *not following Christ*, he does entreat you *not to follow him*, make no mans pattern, no not the best, the universall president for your practise: say with *David*, *Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path*, consider not what the world will commend, but what the word doth command, and say thou in thy actions, in thy words, in thy very thoughts, *Will the Word beare me out in this, will Iesus Christ take this kindly as my band?*

Psal. 119. 150

Thirdly, your reformation must be done by *Covenants*: this will serve you for a *help* as well as a *direction*, if you would be constant and faithfull in your reformation, be frequent in *renewing* your *Covenant* with God, take the Prophet *David* for your pattern, whom you shall find not onely *renewing*, Psal. 119. 7. 8. *I will praise thee with uprightness, I will keep thy Statutes, I will meditate in thy precepts, I will delight myself in thy statutes, &c.* but *renewing* self, and loading himself with *sinners*, for so you hear him speaking to God, Psal. 36. 22. *Thy mercies are upon me not a single vow, but a multiplied vow, multiplied*

plied (as I conceive) not onely in their variety, but in their repetitions; he bound himself over and over again to God, by renewing his vows which he laid upon his head, and walked under his vows as under so many engagements and obligations; yea, you have him not onely *vowing*, but *swearing* too, *Psal. 119. 106. I have sworn and will performe it; that I will keep thy righteous judgements.* Goe thou and doe likewise, thy vow made in Baptisme, and repeated since at the Table of God, renew it again and again, between God, and thine owne soul.

I, but I have broken my vowes so often, and my peace with *Object.* them, that I dare vow no more, lest I should gain nothing by it, but to adde *perjurie* to my *sinne*.

It is sad newes thou tellest, but such as I fear the most are guilty of; *Ans.* but tell me, thou frequentest dayes of humiliation? yes; thou dost repair to the Lords Table, yes; every month I misse not a Sacrament: day: know then Christian, that every day of *humiliation*, and every approach to Gods table, is a solemn renewing of thy vow and covenant with God; thou doest it *virtually*, and by *interpretation*, though thou doest it not formally and in expresse language: *If ye call on the Father who without respect of persons judgeth all men according to his work, passe the time of your sojourning here in fear.* Prayer and every holy duty is an engagement to an holy conversation; In prayer we give up our selves to God; in the Sacrament we bind the bargain; the Sacrament being as on Gods side a seal of his love to the believer, so on the believers side, the seal & oath of his obedience to God: a Christian as oft as he receiveth the Lords Supper doth solemnly protest and swear *by the body and blood of Iesus Christ* to give up himself to God, in all *self deniall*, and well-pleasing.

Now *virtuall* Covenants do bind us as well as *expresse* and *distinct*; for as Divines say, there is a *secret compact* with the divel, whereby though a man speak never a word, yet *silently* he may give his soul to the Diavel (as if one use the gestures, and ceremonies, and actions of Witches and Conjurers for the producing of such and such effects, though not with a distinct purpose to give away his soul to the Diavel, he doth *virtually* and *secretly* contract with him;) so on the other side whoever draws near to God in these solemn duties, especially the Sacrament, doth by *interpretation* give up and bind himself over to God in solemn contract and covenant. Now then if thou art afraid to renew thy vowes and covenant with God, why art not thou as

well afraid to keep a day of prayer, or to receive the Sacrament?

*Objct.
Answ.*

But you will say, *it is better not to vow then not to pay*, Eccleſ. 5. 4. That is ſpoken of *indifferent things*, which are in your own choice and power, as in caſe of *free will offerings*; here indeed better not to vow then not to pay, but in *moral* things, whereunto the law of God doth bind us, though we bind not our ſelves, we are for the ſtrengthening of our obediencially reſolutions, whether it be in the reſiſting of ſin, or the keeping our ſelves cloſe to God in the duties of holineſſe, and the holineſſe of converſation, often to renew our vows and Covenants with God; my reaſon is, becauſe a man is bound to uſe all means to bring the heart and life to as neer a conformity with the will of God, as is poſſible, and therefore if the renewing of our Covenant be a means ſanctified by Gods own appointment for this purpoſe, it is not left arbitrary to us what to doe in this matter.

The heart is like a peece of ground, bordering upon the Sea ſide, richly worth the keeping, but liable to the inundations of many Seas of corruptions and temptations; vowes and Covenants are a Chriſtians walls and banks to reſiſt thoſe ſierce aſſaults, and though ſome ſpring-tides of boyſterous temptations ſhould break over thoſe banks, yet a Chriſtian is bound ſtill to renew and repair the fences, that the heart may not lye under a deluge of ſin, and ſo periſh to eternity.

Objct.

But am I to vow that which is not in my power to performe? can any man vow and promiſe to God he will never ſinne again?

Anſw.

I anſwer, firſt, there be indeed ſome finnes that are *inward* and *ſpiritual*, which are not in our power to withſtand, as *ſudden paſſion*, the riſings and bubblings of *ſecret corruptions*, *distraktion* in holy duties; now though a Chriſtian cannot vow, he will never be paſſionate any more, or never be diſtracted in any duty again, yet he may vow and covenant with God to keep a ſtricter watch over his paſſions, to look more narrowly to his thoughts; therefore reſolve *to keep thy heart with all diligence*.

Prov. 4. 23.

2.

Secondly, for other *external ſins*, as drunkenneſſe, and adultery, and Sabbath breaking, or what elſe it is which doth moſt eaſily beſet a man, he is bound to ſtrengthen himſelf againſt their encounters by laying new engagements of vowes and covenants upon his own ſoul never to commit them again.

3.

Thirdly, at leaſt a man is bound to vow againſt the *occaſions*, that do betray and circumvent him to the committing of ſuch and ſuch finnes.

to avoid the places; the company whereby he hath been ensnared and taken, to the wounding of the Gospels honour, and his owne peace, and to promise to God more care and circumspection in his walking.

Fourthly, though breach of Covenant be a great sinner; yet there is mercie for that as well as for other finnes against the law of God; *the blond of the Covenant* is of power to exiate *the guilt of the Covenant*.

And besides, I conceive (under correction) that every *falling* and *sinne after Covenant* is not a *formall breach of Covenant*, as long as a man is willing to owne the Covenant, and to stand to it as his own act and deed, as *David* saith, *I have sworn and will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgements*, Psal. 119. 106. I have sworn, *David* had entred into the Covenant long before, and sealed it with an oath, and now he looks upon it again, and owns it, *I will perform it*; as if he should say, this is the Covenant made with God, &c. I do not repent, of it, if it were to do againe, I would do it, I will stand to it, as long as breath is in my body; *I have sworn, and I will perform it, that I will keep thy judgements*. Now though *David* after this oath, might fall into sinner, and possibly the same sin against which he had sworn (suppose that sin of lying, against which he prayeth so earnestly, *Psal. 119. 29.*) yet I doe not conceive he can be properly said to have broken the Covenant, in as much as notwithstanding all his failings and fallings, yet he is *conscienciously resolved to stand to it*, and to make it good to the utmost of created nature and renewed grace. I should therefore rather chuse to call it a *trespass* against the Covenant, then a *breach of Covenant*.

The Covenant is then *properly broken*, when a man finding himself hampered and shackled with his vowes, will *vow no more*, that he may *sinne the more freely*; and therefore take heed it be not the *love of sinne* rather then the *fear of perjury*, that keeps thee from renuing thy Covenant with God; be humbled for what is past, labour to *break thy heart for breaking thy Covenant*; abhor thy self in dust and ashes, and if thou beest afraid to *break* the Covenant, be not afraid to *make it*. *Fear not to make it*, but *make it in fear* and trembling. But remember to make thy Covenant at *Christs feet*, consider in whose strength thou must *make and keep* the Covenant, and therefore doe not onely labour to *make thy Covenant in Christ*, but labour to *get into the Covenant with Christ*, thou wilt never *keep* Covenant, till thou art in Covenant.

Out of the Arke (in *Noah's* flood) there was *no salvation*, I make no question, in that universall deluge there was many could swim well, yet *no man could save himself by swimming*, though peradventure he could swim an houre, or two, or three, yet he could not out-swim the flood, but at length tired, and spent to the last drop of strength and spirits, must needs sink and perish, onely in the Arke there was life and safety.

The whole world saith the Apostle, *Positum est in maligno*, lies as it were in a *deluge of sinne*, and corruption, 1 *Ioh.* 5. 19. there is no safety by swimming, a man cannot out-swim the delv, though he may for a day, or two, or more or lesse, upon some pangs and convulsion of conscience, some apprehensions of the wrath and terrour of God, abstain from and suspend some acts of sin.

The Apostle tels us, that the *devil takes naturall men captive at his pleasure*, 1 *Tim.* 2. 26. the delv may let a man swim a stroak or two, (or so) from him by some morall resolutions and endeavours, but he swims after presently, overtakes him, and brings him back again *at his pleasure*, and therefore be warned by Gods *Noah's*, fly into the Arke, desire the Lord Jesus to be mercifull unto thee, and to take thee *into the ark*, the *covenant of life and grace*; Christ is the *fountain of life*, and salvation, *Psal.* 36. 9. with thee is the *well-spring of life*; see therefore and be convinced, of thy need of a Christ, not a *pardoning Christ* only, but a *ruling, a governing, a teaching Christ*, victorie over sin, as well as pardon of sin, must be fetched from the blood of the Covenant, *Heb.* 9. 14. *How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternall spirit offered himselfe without spot to God, purge your consciences from dead works to serve the living God*; here is purging, and not only from the guile of sin, but from the stain and filth of sinne, for observe, I beseech you,

First, it is a *purging of the conscience* from dead workes, not from *killing foures* only and accusations, but from *dead works*, works that argue a man to be dead in sinnes and trespasses; and secondly, it is a purging, that fits a man to *serve the living God*, not only a *pardoning* *cleansing*, but a *quickenng cleansing*; such a cleansing as makes the *dead conscience* fit to serve the *living God*, a purifying and inlivening of the conscience, which pardon only of sin, cannot do; for should God *pardon* all that is past, and not give *quickenng cleansing grace* for the time to come, a man would quickly make new work for hell and damnation,

tion; dead consciences cannot serve a living God, an impure conscience cannot serve a pure and holy God: Now both these purgings of the Conscience from dead works must be in the *Fountain which God hath set open for Iudah and Ierusalem to wash in from sin, and from uncleannesse, even the blood of Iesus Christ*, who through the eternall Spirit offered himselfe to God. And therefore to Christ, to Christ come all things lost and dang (with the Apostle, *Phil. 3. 8. 9.*) that thou maiest get into him, and know the power of his *Resurrection*, and the fellowship of his sufferings, that thou maiest be conformable to his death, if you will be the people of whom God saies in *Isai. 63. 8.* Surely these are my people, children that will not lye: that so he may be your Saviour. Take Christ to you, and give up your selves to Christ. Thy faithfulness in keeping Covenant with Christ must issue from the faithfulness of Christ: covenanting with thee.

Fourthly, (to conclude in a word) this reformation must be *speedy*. Now, Now therefore let us make, &c. and *Thou arose Early*, there was no delay about this businesse. Now therefore doe you neither think of any more *delays*, and *hereafters* and *tomorrows* in your personal and domestical Reformations, if thou intended to be better, *Why not now?* I may speak to you as *Pharaohs* servants bespake him. *Exod. 10. 7.* How long shall these men be a snare unto us, *Will thou yet knowest thou not yet, that Egypt is destroyed*: So may I say unto thee, how long shall these and these lusts be a snare unto thee, how long shall thy drunkenness, thy worldlinesse, thy pride, be a snare unto thee, let thy sins goe, give them a bill of divorce, and send them away; knowest thou not, that *England is almost destroyed*; knowest thou not, that thy sin hath almost undone the whole Nation? knowest thou not that thy *soul* is almost destroyed, has not thy lust darkened thy Indgements, hardened thy heart, seared thy conscience, and almost laid thy *soul* waste, like a barren wilderness? Oh how long shall thy sin be a snare to thee, to day, to day, if you will heare his voice, to day, to day, heare the voice of God; it is three times inculcated in *Heb. the 3.* and the reason is given in the 13. verse, *lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin*, where you have exprest a double danger of delay.

1. That *sin is deceiving*, and 2. That *that deceitfulness is of an hardening nature*, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. Man gets nothing by his deferring of his Reformation & Conversion to God, but the venturing of the hardening of his heart against reformation. You would not have the nationall reformation delayed,
you

Isai 49
7. 8.

you have cryed concerning it, as *Siferahs* mother concerning him, *Why is his chariot so long in coming? why stay the wheels of his chariot?* you would not stay long for publike reforming of your grievances; let not God stay long for the personall reforming of your sinfull courses; I will end all with that quickning Motive, *2 Cor. 6. 2.* *Now is the accepted time, now is the day of Salvation,* the words are quoted out of the prophesie of *Isaiab*, and spoken by God to the Redeemer, ver. 7. 8. *Thus saith the Lord, in an acceptable time have I heard thee, in a day of salvation, have I helped thee;* it was a day of salvation, because an acceptable time, the time of Gods willingness or free grace, as the Hebrew signifies: the meaning is, Christ was heard and succoured in the day and work of Salvation, because he apprehended the *accepted time*, had Christ neglected his time appointed by God the Father, it had not been a time of salvation, he had not been a Redeemer. And therefore if Christ himselfe could not be a Redeemer, but he must take Gods time, how canst thou think to be redeemed, if thou shalt neglect the season, that God offers. The *accepted time is the day of salvation*, and the *now* is the *Now is the accepted time*.

Accept of Gods time, and God accept of thee, for the Redeemers sake. To whom with the Father and the holy Ghost be glory for ever. Amen.

FINIS.

